
House & Garden
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english style
HOW TO BUY A PIANO
5 HOLIDAY TABLE SETTINGS


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velvet jacket $44

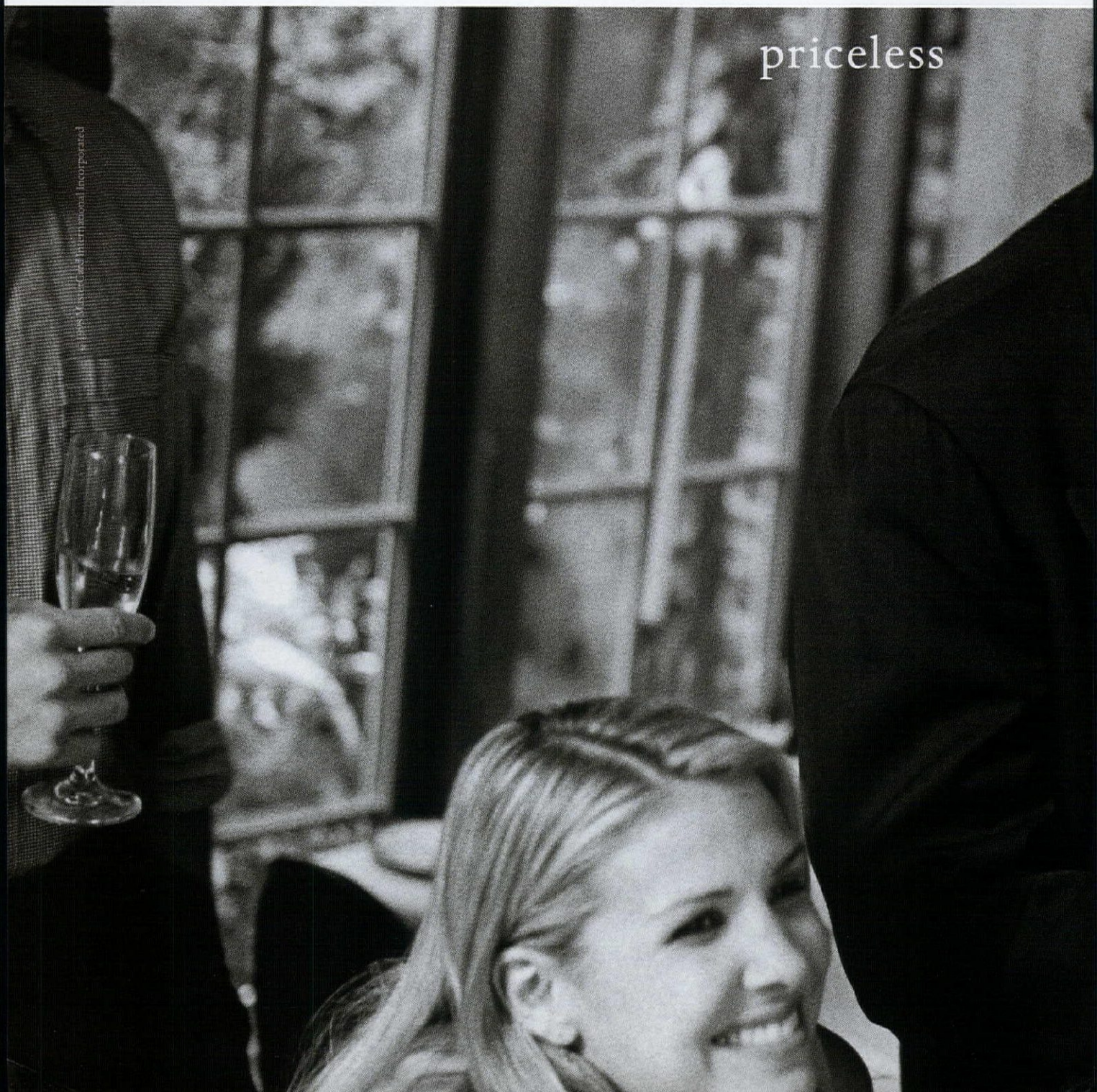
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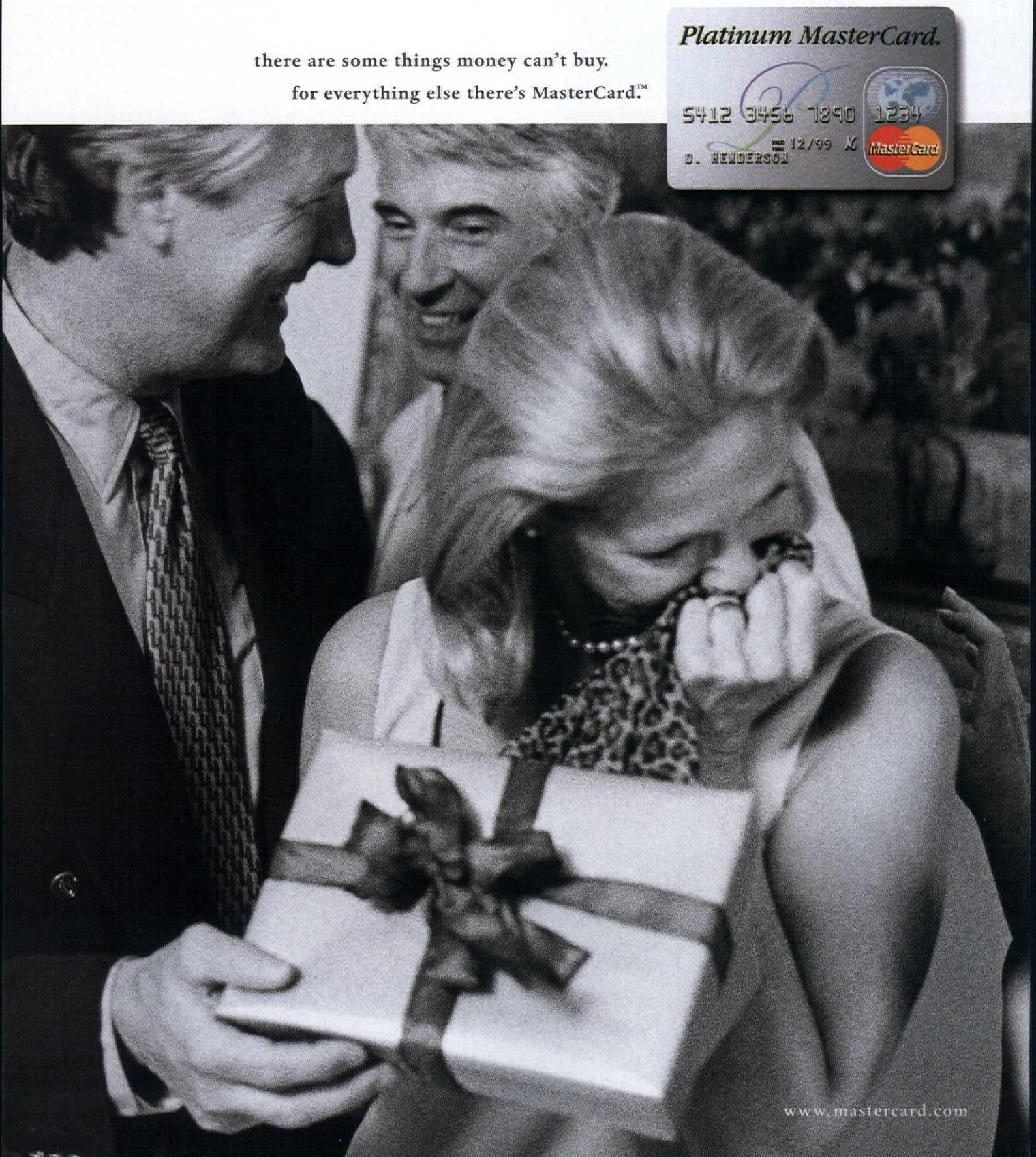
one leopard-print, peekaboo nightie: $45

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House & Garden

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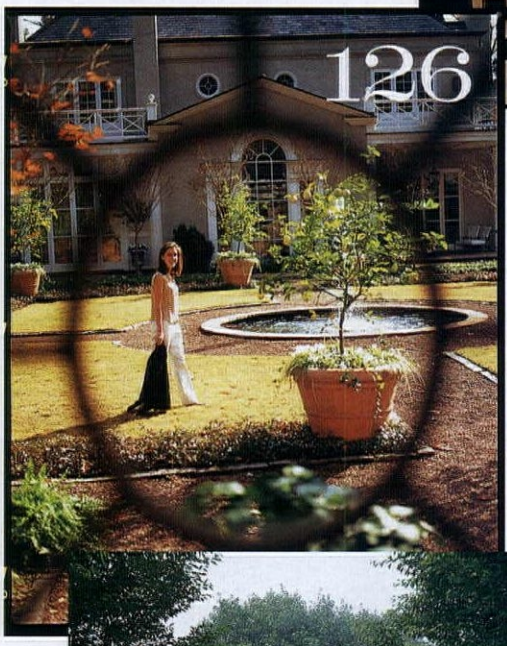
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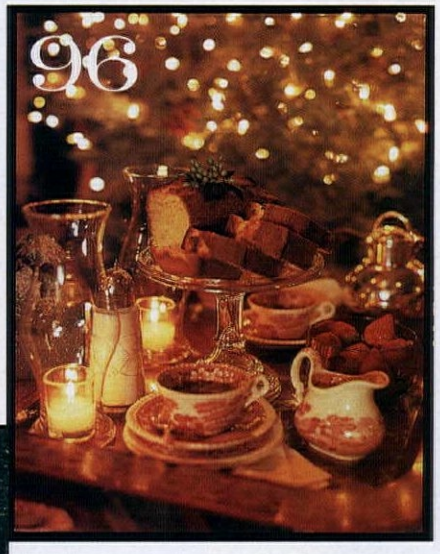
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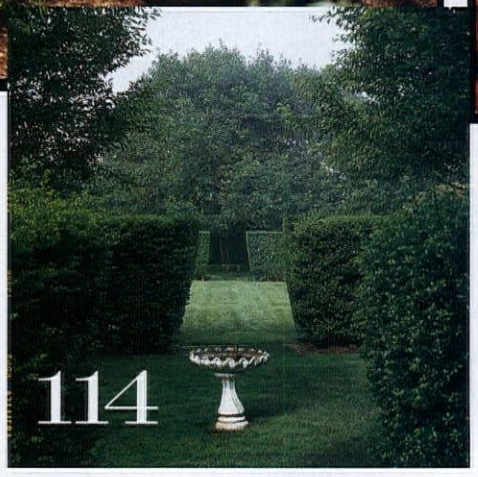
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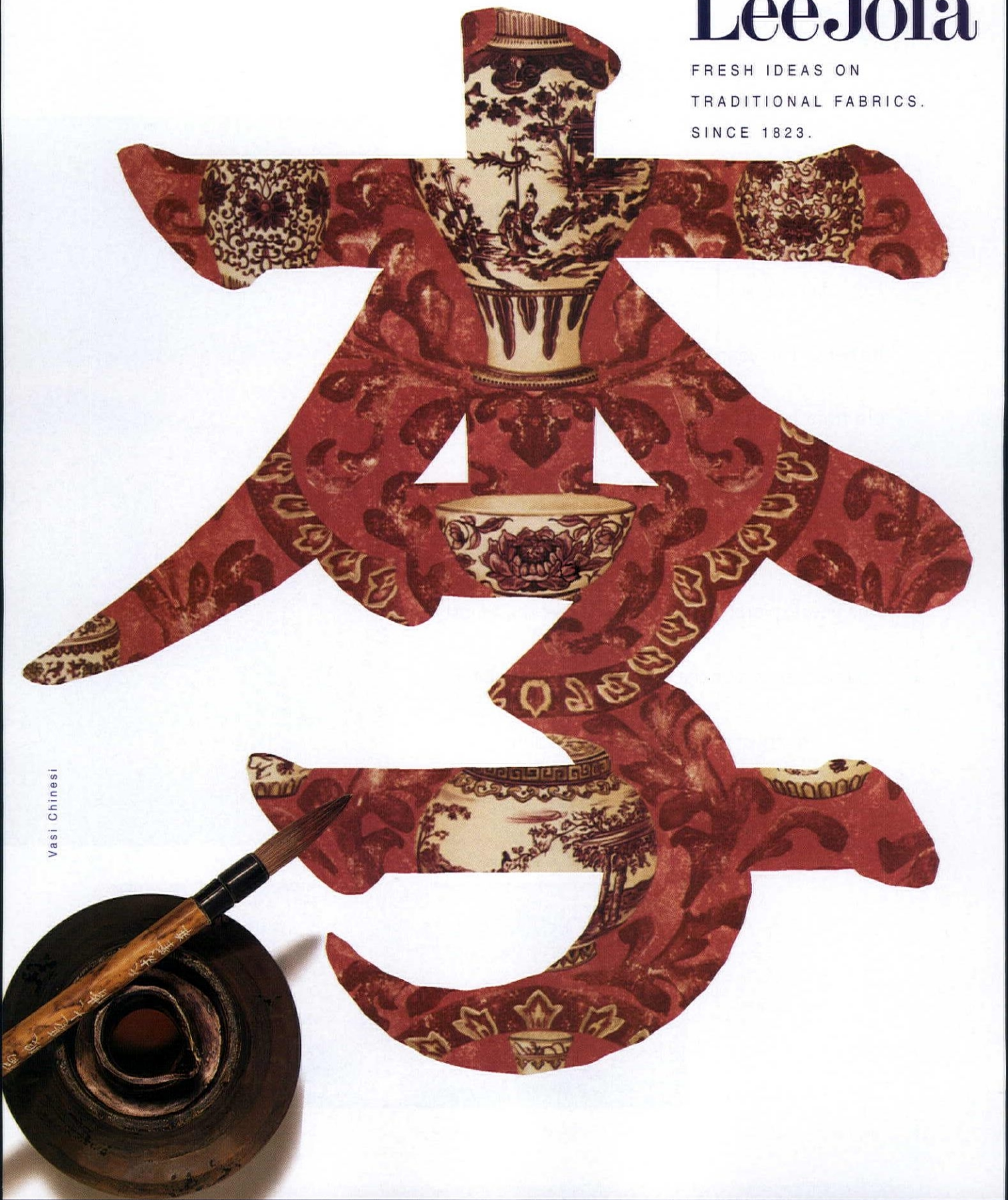

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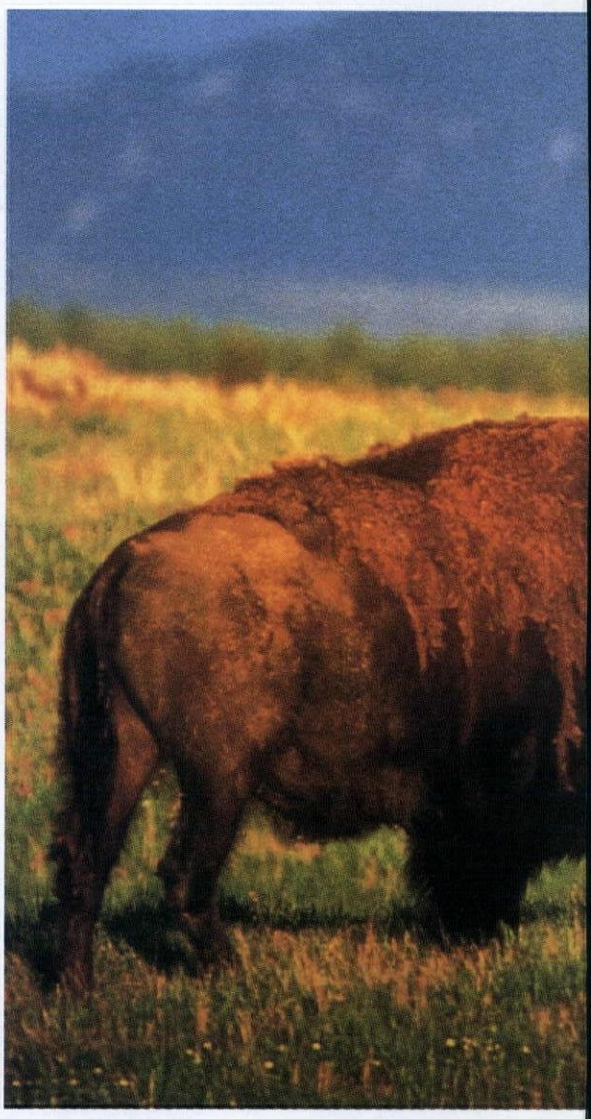
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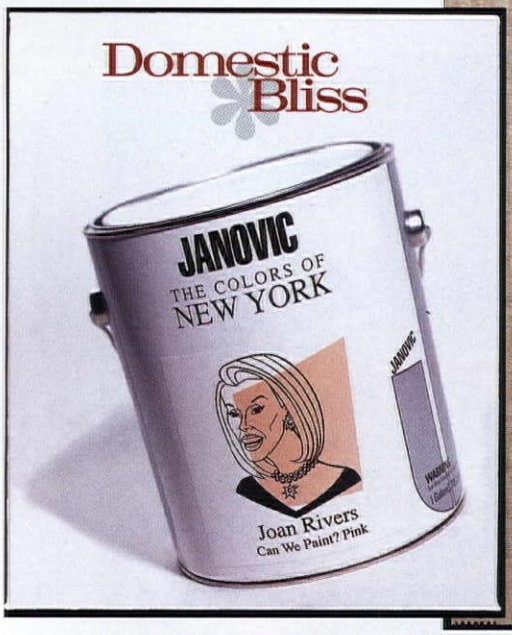
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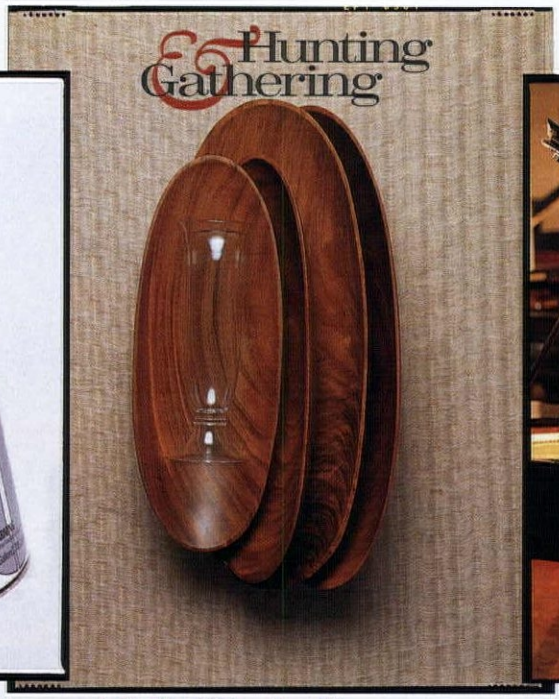
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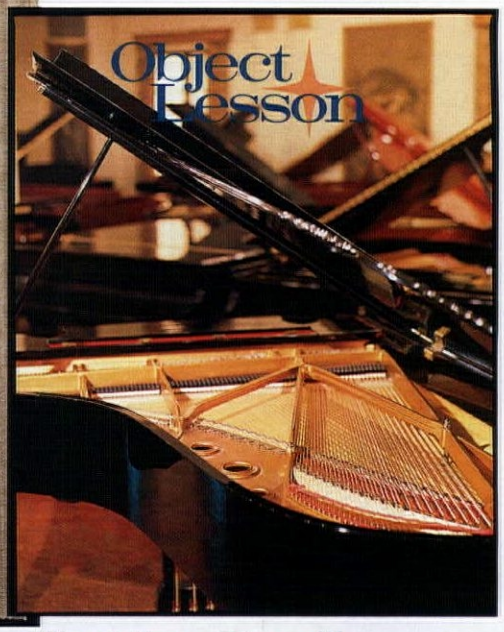
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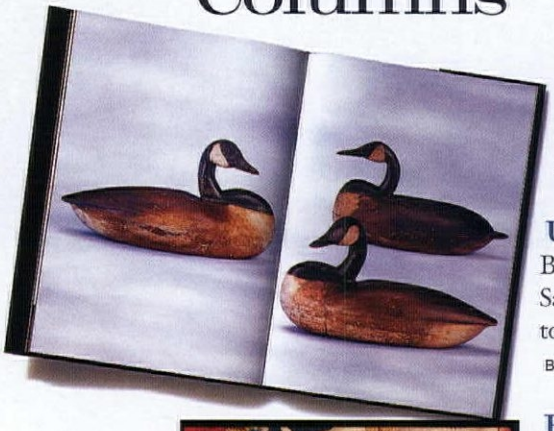




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# Get a Life

WELL, IT'S THE TIME OF YEAR again that puts me in a more thingful kind of mood than usual. I'm fretting over my holiday shopping lists. Do you have any diehard modernists on yours? Any card-carrying members of the Design Police? You know, the friends who, say, several years ago couldn't get enough of those strangely scented Diptyque candles (figuier, myrrhe, basilique, bois ciré), available only from one tiny Paris boutique—but who, now that Diptyque is available at Barneys and like, everywhere, are totally over it. Of course, many of those friends don't allow themselves to have things at all. (Though somehow Prada shoes and Gucci bags appear on the approved list of things even a minimalist welcomes.) These are the most difficult people to shop for. They don't fall in love with things, they fall into line.

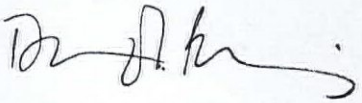
I came across a show at London's Design Museum this fall that should serve as a cure for the Holier-than-Thou Thinglessness reigning among today's modernists. Certainly it should clear up the misperception that modernism equals minimalism. Sponsored by Gucci and Vitra, it is a retrospective of The Work of Charles and Ray Eames. Husband and wife, the Eameses met as students at the Cranbrook Academy in Michigan, and went on to spend over 30 years together as design partners, creating houses, textiles, furniture. They pioneered a method of manufacturing molded plywood for everything from leg splints to chairs to sculpture. They made seating and tables for airports, school cafeterias, living rooms. Everything they did seemed an act of imagination fired by love. (In one video clip, a colleague of theirs tearfully describes the last time she saw Charles, at a Valentine's Day party at the Smithsonian. He had cut dozens of little pink hearts out of tissue paper, and everytime he saw a woman friend he pulled a heart out of his pocket and pressed it into her hand.)

A high point of the exhibit was a four-minute video tour of the house the Eameses designed and built for themselves in California in 1949. We get a brisk walk through the kitchen, living room, bedroom, and studio—complete with the famous chair and ottoman favored by everyone's psychiatrist. The architecture is serenely boxy, open, and airy. Gridded, shoji screen–inspired glass walls form a subtle delineation between indoors and out. Rectangles of red, yellow, blue, and white panels punctuate the glass, Mondrian-style. The rooms are expansive but not grand, the detailing around doors and windows the simplest of gestures. I've seen many photos of the Eames house over the years, and I've always responded well to its graceful strength and playfulness.

But what was most moving to me this time was all the stuff. This house was full. Full of a lifetime of accumulated treasures, souvenirs, collections, and tchotchkes. Every shelf in the living room was crammed with books and sculpture and pre-Columbian artifacts. Every surface was covered with rocks, sticks, Mexican dolls, painted clay vessels, tiny woven boxes, Japanese combs. . . . The banquettes were crammed with pillows and draped with colorful weavings from many countries. You won't see all these things in heavily edited photos, especially those taken after the Eameses' death. Yes, some of the stuff was beautiful, some instructive—but some bordered on kitsch. All were the things of people who simply took delight in what the world had to offer. Theirs was at once a naive and a sophisticated sense of fun. Uninhibited, unafraid, undisciplined, unruly, unregimented fun. I often wonder what's wrong with me—almost as soon as I get rid of lots of stuff in one of those ritualistic Simplification Purges we put ourselves through, I accumulate just as much to replace it. Maybe nothing's wrong. After all, here are the Mom and Dad of American modernism, and their steel and glass architectural icon is merely—and perfectly and dearly—a shell. But a shell, like all shells, that contained life. So go out and shop for things that will tease open the worlds of those trend-slave disciplinarian friends. Give them things they can fall for.



PHOTOGRAPH BY BRIGITTE LACOMBE



Dominique Browning, EDITOR

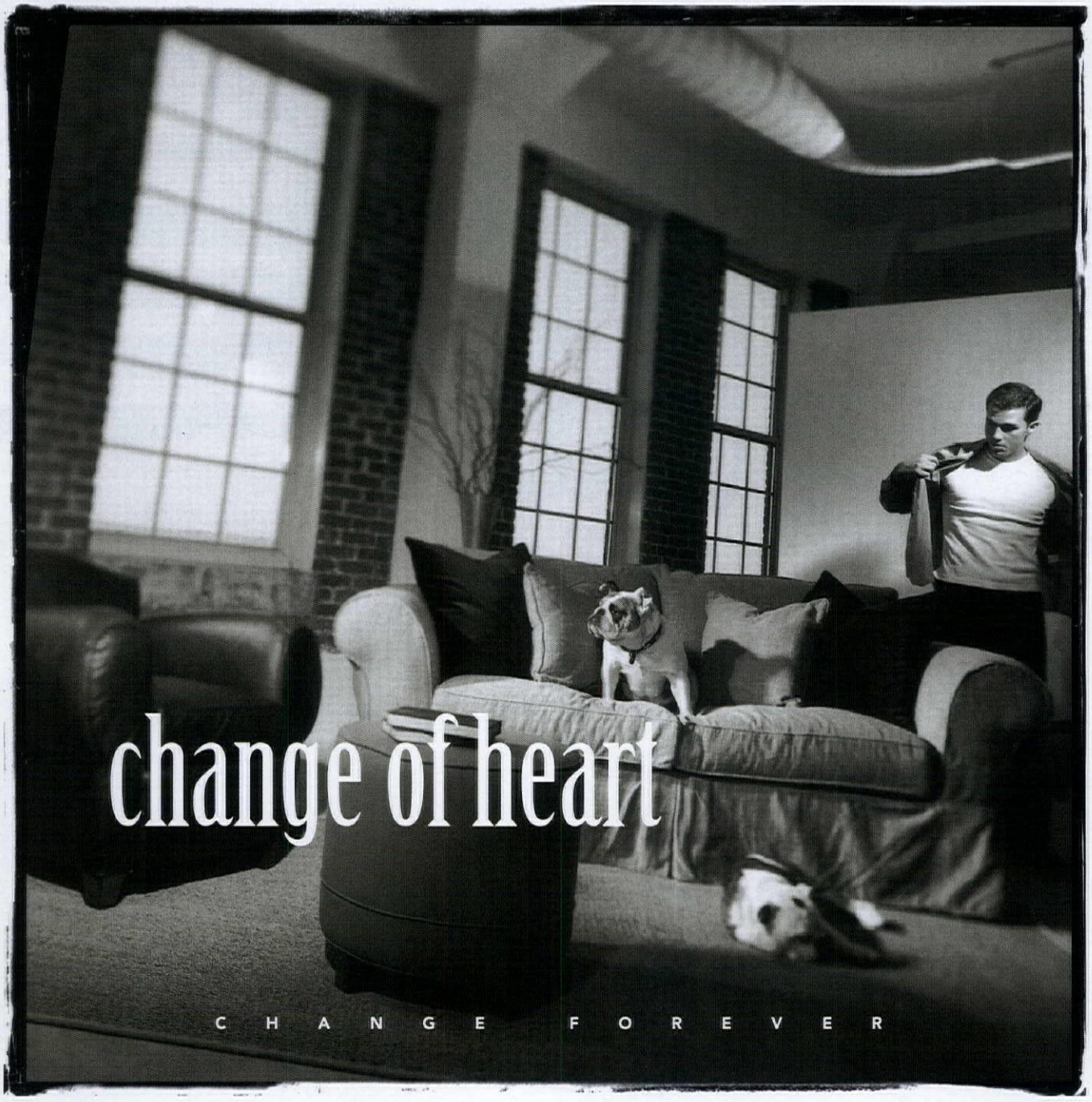
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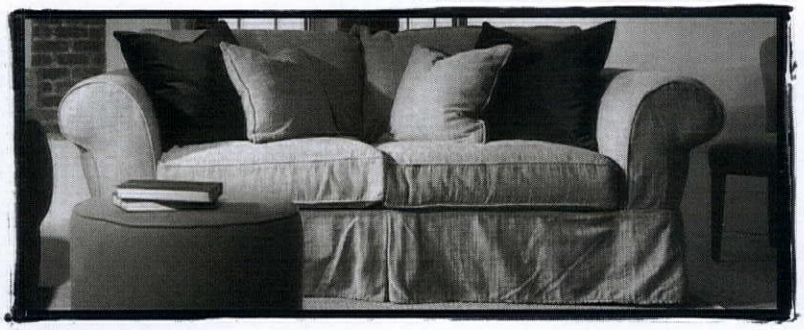
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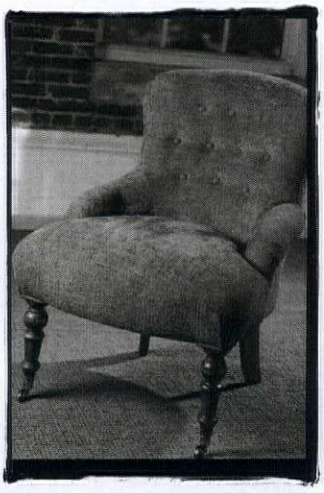

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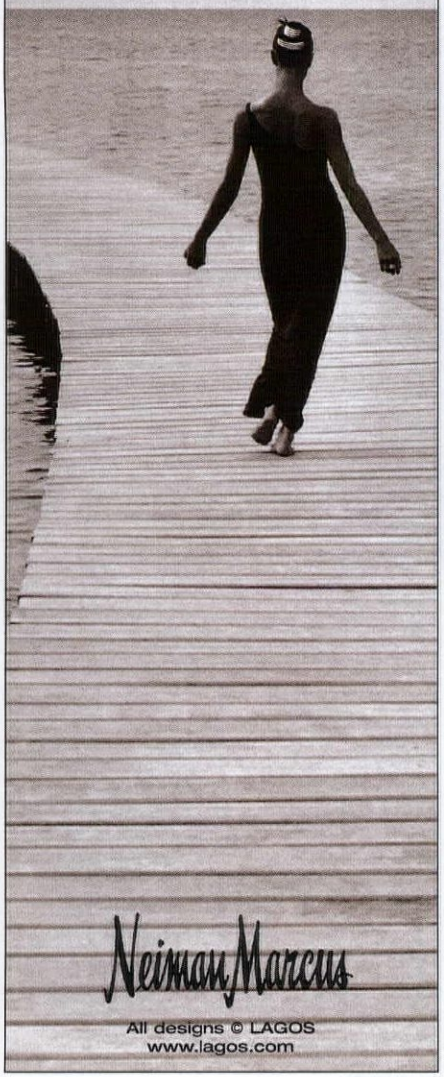
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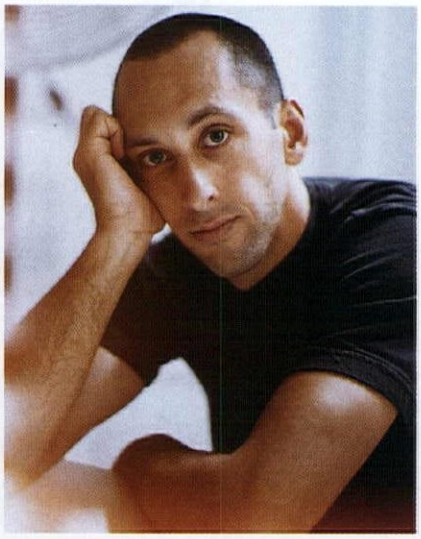
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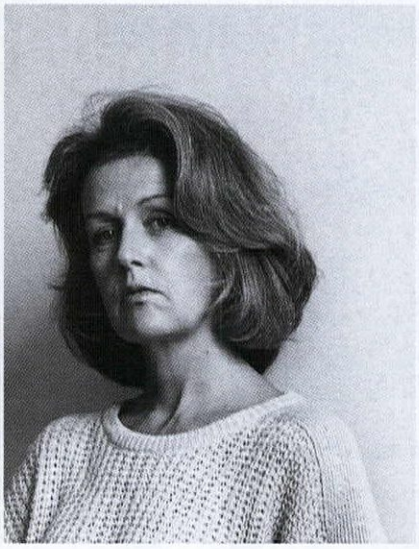
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# contributors



## ^ MICHAEL MUNDY

The photographer was only 22 when he first worked for *House & Garden,* in 1985. Since then, he has traveled extensively on fashion and interior assignments. Among his favorite destinations: China, South America, and India, where he once drove through the desert all night to see the sun rise over the Taj Mahal. He stayed in New York to shoot "Gorgeous Georgian" (page 84) for this issue.



## ^ ANNABEL DAVIS-GOFF

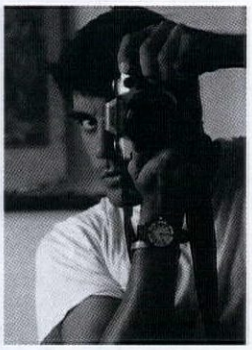
This Irish writer of three published novels and a family memoir, *Walled Gardens*, now lives in New York City, where she vows to remain as long as one of her two children lives nearby. She is currently working on a fourth novel, set in Ireland. This month, in "Cotswold Revival" (page 116), Davis-Goff reports on a English garden on eastern Long Island.

## LISA GERMANY

For this issue's "It's Not Academic" (page 108), the writer revisited Harvard University, where she had held a 1996 Loeb fellowship, awarded for her magazine coverage of architecture and a biography of Harwell Hamilton Harris. Germany and her husband, artist Mel Ziegler, remember the house's renovation as a high point of their walks around campus.

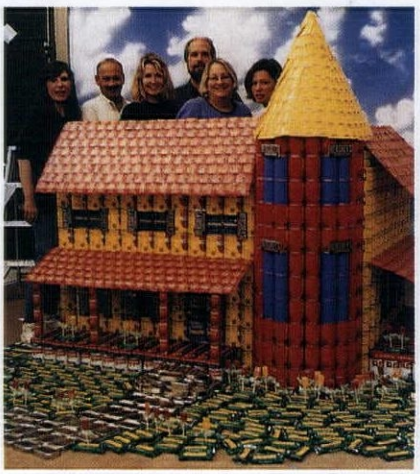
## v MICHAEL McDERMIT

After growing up on a farm in Wisconsin and attending college in Rochester, New York, the photographer chose Europe as the logical place to settle. McDermit has been based there for ten years, and captured French actress Carole Bouquet as she brought a centuries-old ritual to life in "Lucky 13," page 136. "She seemed symbolic of the unpretentious food she was preparing," he says.



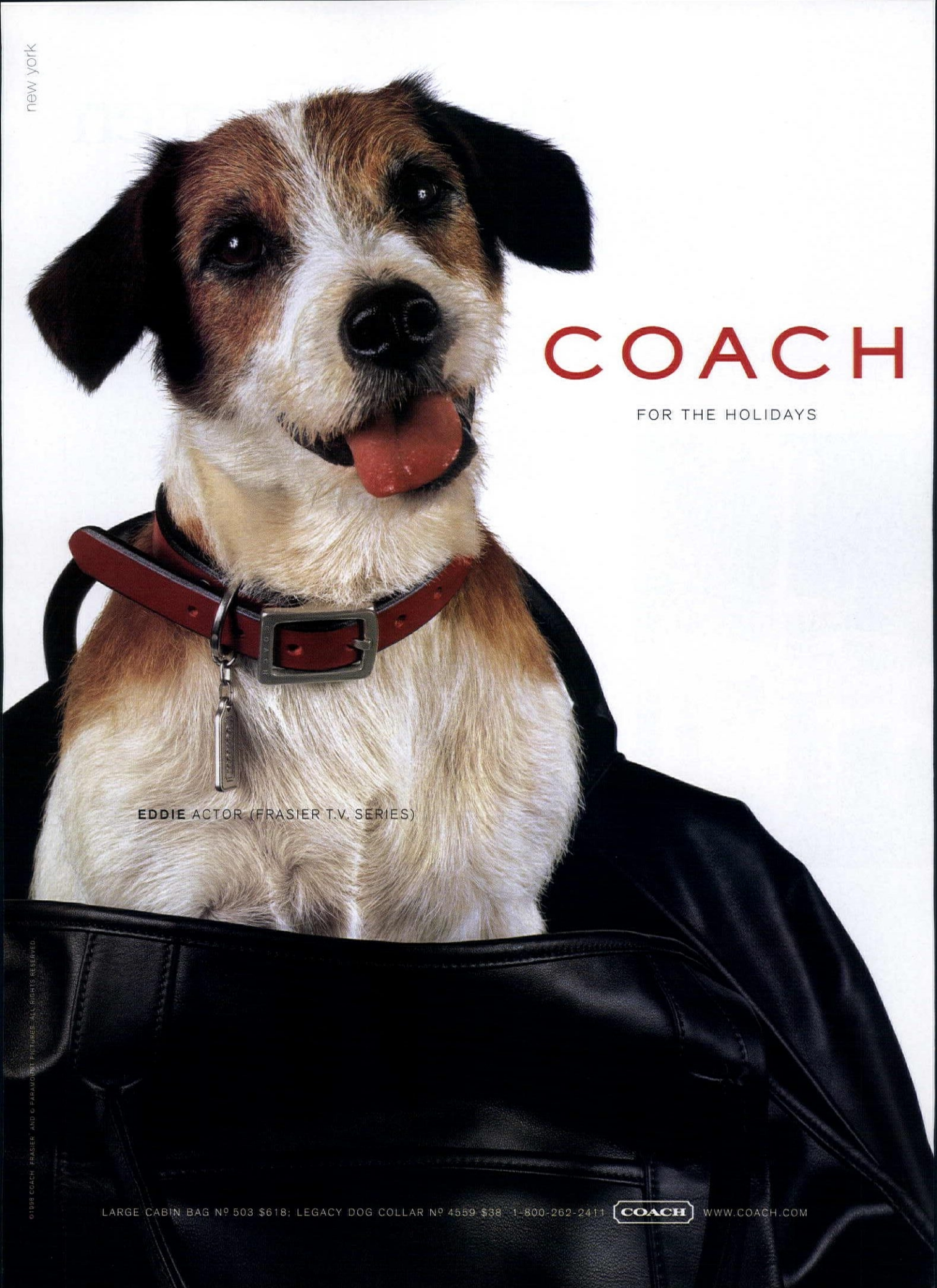
## v CAN-STRUCTION

The team who created a house of tins for this issue (page 29) are from left: Cheri Melillo, Butler Rogers Baskett; John Spinelli, National Reprographics Inc.; Kathyrn Koller, Butler Rogers Baskett; David Danielson and Leah Kaplan, National Reprographics; and Madeleine Dymling, NBBJ in NYC. Missing: Bill Zablocki, National Reprographics. —HOPE MEYERS



ANNABEL DAVIS-GOFF BY JEANNETTE MONTGOMERY BARRON; CAN-STRUCTION BY NAT BAINER; MICHAEL MUNDY BY UDOM SURANGSOPHON; MICHAEL McDERMIT; SELF-PORTRAIT

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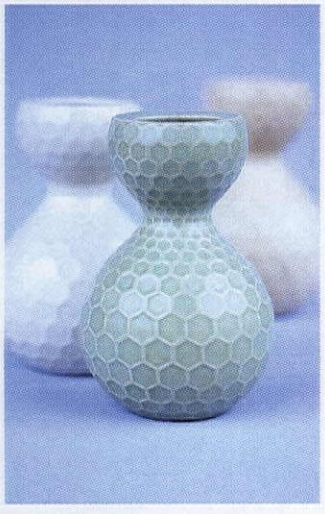

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Zagros burgundy

# TUFENKIAN TIBETAN CARPETS

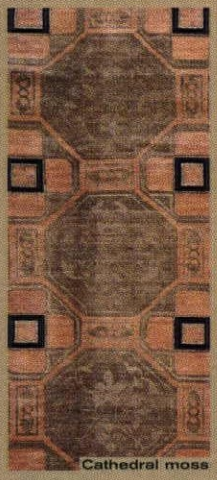
Precisely Imprecise

Perfectly Imperfect...

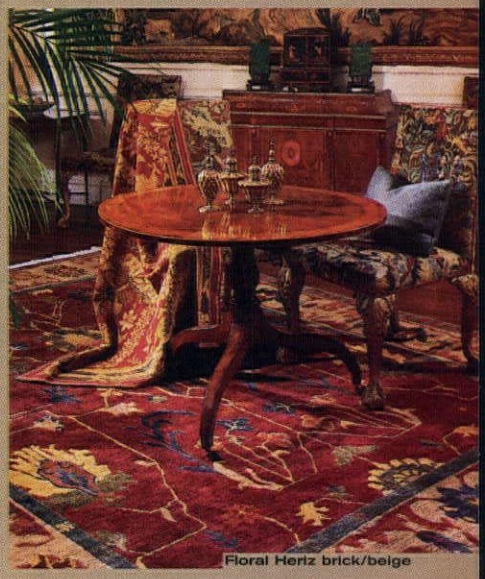



Samsoon umber earth

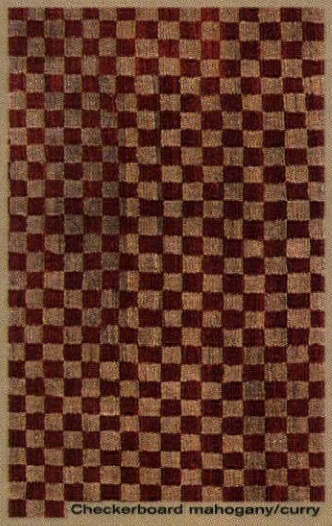

Bidjar spruce


Cathedral moss


Zagros cocoa


Floral Heriz brick/beige


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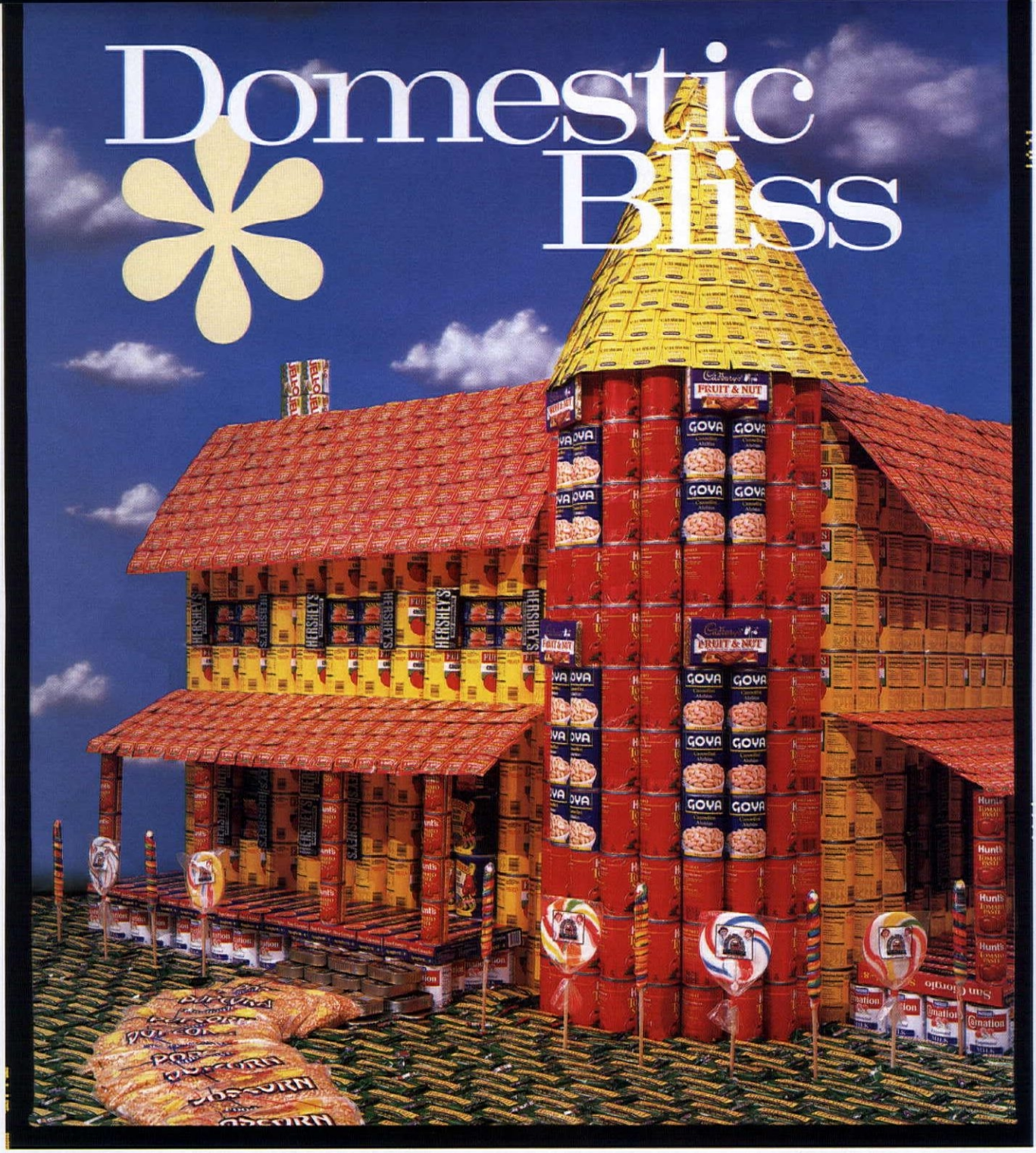
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Zagros burgundy room design from French Designer Showhouse by Bardin & Paloma


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"A Sparkling Love Story"
"Wonderfully Romantic"
Starring Amber Valletta
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Splendor
SOMETIMES THERE'S A MOMENT WHEN EVERYTHING COMES TOGETHER... A MOMENT OF SPLENDOR.
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# Domestic Bliss




PHOTOGRAPH BY MONICA STEVENSON. PRODUCED BY DEBORAH WEISBACH. HOUSE DESIGNED AND BUILT BY DAVID DANIELSON, MADELEINE DYMLING, LEAH SUZANNE KAPLAN, KATHY KOLLER, CHERI MELILLO, JOHN SPINELLI AND BILL ZABLOCKI.

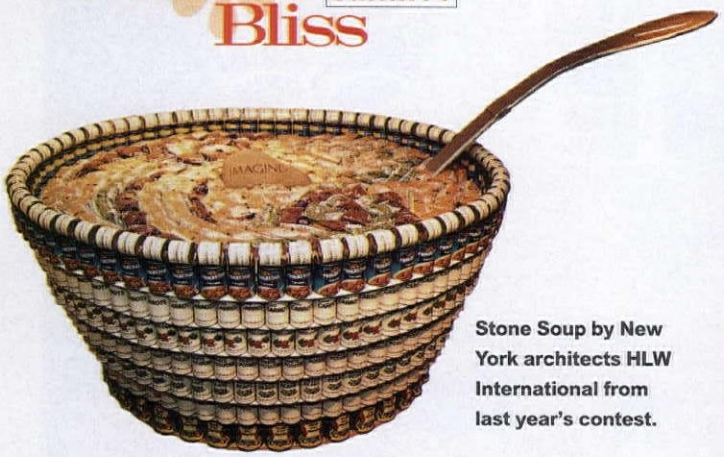
## charity begins at home

From **collecting canned goods** for food banks to furnishing shelters, decorators and architects have proved they are **compassionate souls**. So in the spirit of the season, we celebrate the design world's generosity and philanthropy. Even The 20-Minute Gardener has devised **a benevolent way** to deal with those pesky deer.

EDITED BY DAN SHAW

# Domestic Bliss

CHARITY



**Stone Soup by New York architects HLW International from last year's contest.**

## can you believe it?

Cheri Melillo is a can-do person. The office administrator for Butler Rogers Baskett, architects of New York's Chelsea Piers, she moonlights as executive director of CANSTRUCTION. In an annual competition, architects and engineers erect structures—from giant TV sets to bridges—out of canned goods that are later distributed to food banks. "I thought if we turned a food drive into a design competition we'd get people to participate," says Melillo, who started the New York competition six years ago. Now there are CANSTRUCTION contests (sponsored by the Society of Design Administration and the American Institute of Architects) in 33 cities, and she hopes that this year's New York event (November 12 to 19), at the United Nations, will inspire overseas competitions. "Unlike sandcastle and ice-carving contests, where the entries wash and melt away," she says, "can structures stand—*and* stand for something."



## MIRACLE FLOWERS

It's the ultimate flower arrangement: Miracle House, an organization that assists out-of-town families of New Yorkers living with AIDS or cancer, teamed up with Elan Flowers to operate a charity florist. "Last year, two of our volunteers, Chip Conrad and Carlos Coimbra, passed away. They owned the Larkspur flower shop and left it to us," explains Miracle House executive director Gilles Mesrobian. Now Elan's Michael Davis, above, fulfills M. H. Larkspur's orders out of his Tribeca shop (212-619-4055). "It's unconventional," says Mesrobian. "Twenty percent of each purchase directly benefits our services. That's the real beauty of our flowers."



## good will hunting

The three Housing Works thrift stores in Manhattan bill themselves as "the Salvation Armani." Troll their donated wares and you may surface with such catches as a Noguchi table, a Donghia sofa, or a Herman Miller chair. "Lately we've been getting a lot of Knoll and Thonet," says Bill Gover, director of the shops (212-366-0820), which benefit the eight-year-old nonprofit agency that provides housing and other services for homeless New Yorkers living with HIV and AIDS. "Some decorators visit all three stores on a daily basis," Gover adds. The stores' windows, which change every two weeks, are designed to attract style-conscious shoppers. For the above display, Gover explains, "We made a point not to clean" the silver-plated tea set, to give the window a "perfectly old" feeling. Indeed, "perfectly old" are the very words to describe the Housing Works look. —JULIE GRAY

## rainbow coalition




**Some of the Lenox Hill Neighborhood House's best friends are decorators. The 104-year-old social-service agency (212-744-5022), located on Manhattan's free-spending Upper East Side, raises a lot of money by working with the design community. Its annual holiday bazaar features decorators' one-of-a-kind Christmas stockings made from donated Scalamandré fabrics. And Janovic/Plaza, the neighborhood's favorite paint-store chain, now has a line of 13 charity paints, left. Proceeds from every gallon of Cindy Adams's Gossip Red, Todd Oldham's Beatle Wing (green), and Joan Rivers's Can We Paint? (pink) go to Lenox Hill's summer-camp scholarship program.**

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: COURTESY CANSTRUCTION; CARLOS EMILIO; DARRYL PATTERSON; ALFONSE PAGANO



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# housewarming

A home, of course, is not merely a roof over one's head. So after Central City Concern (503-294-1681), a nonprofit group in Portland, Oregon, raised enough money to buy a fleabag motel to house low-income people with HIV and AIDS, it turned to the design community for help. "In order for people to heal physically and emotionally, they need to be in surroundings that reflect back to them that they do matter," says Traci Manning, manager of development and marketing for Central City Concern, which operates 1,100 low-income housing units in Portland. Thirty-eight local designers adopted rooms at the made-over motel, right, ripping out plastic paneling and mangy carpets to create cozy, cheerful, life-affirming apartments.





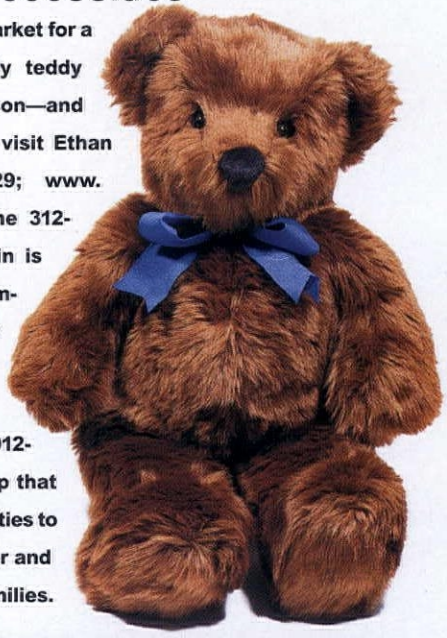

# save while you give

Good reasons for shopping at Workbench in November: Twenty percent off *everything* in the stores, plus knowing that 10 percent of the chain's net November profits—you pick which charity to support—will go to the Susan G. Komen Breast Cancer Foundation, HOPE for Kids, American Foundation for Suicide Prevention, and AmFAR.

FINDERS KEEPERS

# the bear necessities

**If you're in the market for a cute and cuddly teddy bear this season—and who isn't?—call or visit Ethan Allen (800-228-9229; www.ethanallen.com). The 312-store furniture chain is selling Creature Comfort Critters, right ($19.99), to benefit Habitat for Humanity International (912-924-6935), the group that galvanizes communities to help build houses for and with low-income families.**



# the global gift shop

**The Horse Latitudes, right, a home-furnishings boutique in Greenwich Village, doesn't look as if it was opened to raise funds for a human-rights group. "People think it's going to be crunchy and awful, but it's actually pretty slick," says Nina Feldman, who started the store, with her partner, Jessica Neuwirth (212-206-9014), to funnel money to Equality Now, which focuses on women's issues around the world. "The idea was to use commercial power to further human rights."**



CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: MARSHALL JOHNSON; DARRYL PATTERSON; PAULA BULLWINKEL; ILLUSTRATION: ANJA KROENCKE

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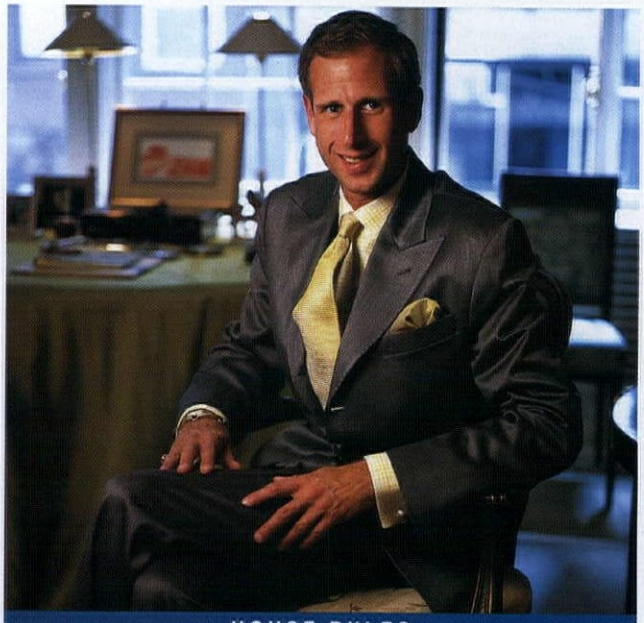



**"We give away everything we can't sell or use," says Bette Kahn, Crate & Barrel's charity coordinator. Over the years, she has donated dishes, glasses, and sofas to shelters, hospices, and single-resident apartments. "Our favorite thing is to help groups with our *schtickel*." Say *what*? "*Schtickel* is an old delicatessen term for the end of the salami—'a *schtickel* for a nickel'—and it's become an in-house term for merchandise we can give away."**

# heavenly help

"Divine" may be the most overused word in the decorating lexicon, but it's put to good use in Los Angeles for the annual Divine Design benefit (213-957-6900). Uniting the fashion and decorating industries, the event at the Pacific Design Center (December 5 to 11) raises money for Project Angel Food, which delivers hot meals to people with AIDS, and DIFFA/Los Angeles, which helps fund direct-service AIDS organizations. Featuring 46 room settings by interior designers, each with items for sale through a silent auction, Divine Design is a shopping extravaganza, with bargains on clothing, antiques, and decorative home accessories.





HOUSE RULES

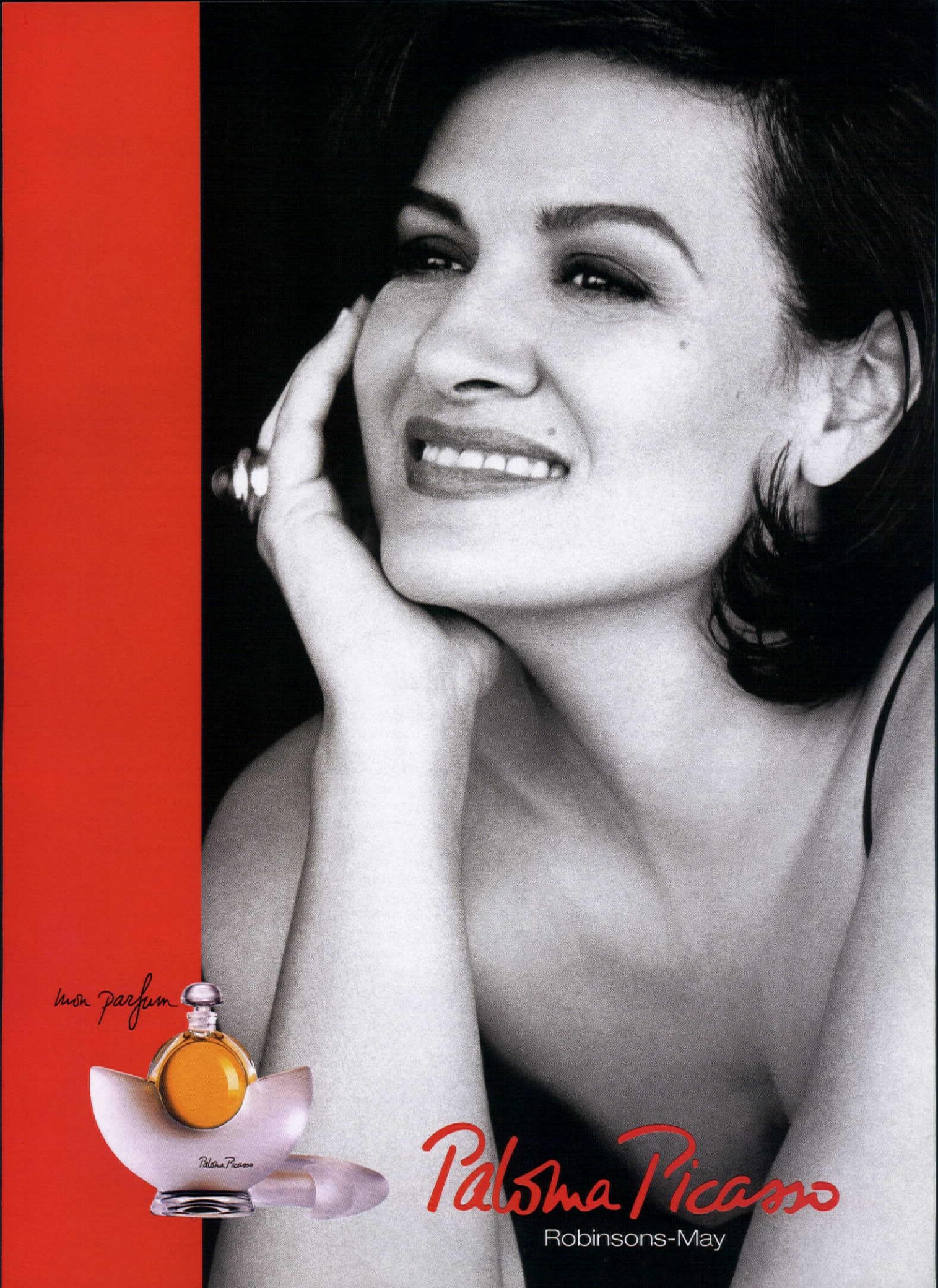
**NAME** Jamie Drake
**RESIDENCE** Small, circa 1890 apartment building in midtown Manhattan.
**RÉSUMÉ** Founded Drake Design Associates 20 years ago; co-chair, Furnish a Future, a program of The Partnership for the Homeless in NYC (718-875-5353).
**CURRENT PROJECTS** London town house; Bermuda villa; Central Park West apartments.
**MY FAVORITE CHARITIES ARE** Furnish a Future, Gay Men's Health Crisis, Housing Works.
**MY MOTTO FOR GIVING IS** Good karma breeds good karma.
**THE FIRST THING I DO WHEN I WAKE UP** Visine, Listerine, caffeine, nicotine, check my answering machine.
**I WATCH TELEVISION** While reading.
**I CAN'T GO TO SLEEP WITHOUT** My two pugs, Cyclops and Dillon, and checking my office answering machine.
**I SLEEP ONLY ON** E. Braun cotton linens.
**MY REFRIGERATOR IS ALWAYS STOCKED WITH** Mocha-chip ice cream.
**MY FAVORITE PLACE TO READ IS** Saline beach, St. Bart's.
**MY LIVING ROOM IS VACUUMED BY** Faye, or so she claims.
**THE MOST-USED ROOM IN MY HOUSE IS** The master bedroom.
**THE LAST PIECE OF FURNITURE I BOUGHT MYSELF WAS** A circa 1940 Bristol blue Venetian chandelier for my new house in East Hampton.
**MY DREAM HOUSE IS** Pavlovsk Palace.
**A HOUSE IS NOT A HOME UNLESS** One laughs a lot in it.



# bay area altruism

**In San Francisco, low-income residents often find themselves in high-style interiors, thanks to Philanthropy By Design (415-552-1772). Relying on volunteers and recycled furnishings, this nonprofit organization refurbishes and decorates interiors for other nonprofit social-service groups. Two recent projects: At The Rose, a residence for the recently homeless, PBD furnished the reception area and community living rooms with gracious wicker armchairs and cozy cushions. For the Children's Room at the Tenderloin Neighborhood Development Corporation Civic Center Residence, left, PBD helped transform a grim basement into a vibrant playroom with fanciful animal murals.**

CLOCKWISE FROM TOP LEFT: DARRYL PATTERSON; ANDREW FRENCH; STEPHANIE RAUSSER


mon parfum
Paloma Picasso
Paloma Picasso
Robinsons-May



# away for the holidays

## How to keep deer out of your yard in the new year

Christmas is not one of Marty's holidays, but he sets up a string of reindeer in his front yard anyway. They go so well with the herds of Bambis that come to browse on his shrubs.

Tom, meanwhile, is decorating his yard with fencing, for he knows that midwinter is a window of opportunity for the deer-oppressed gardener. Deer are creatures of habit, which for most of the year is bad. Though always on the move, they follow a regular circuit, and this means that once they discover your garden, you can count on them returning at regular intervals until all your plantings have been grazed to stumps. But just as winter weather disrupts your commute, so it disrupts theirs. Deer have trouble negotiating icy paths, and after snow falls they gather together in a remote, protected spot to wait for a thaw.

This is your chance. Make the deer detour when they start traveling again by diverting them at your property line. When they settle back into a pattern, your garden won't be on the itinerary. To prepare for this campaign, note ahead of time the route that the deer use into your property. Then, after the snow falls, lay down a roadblock. The type of barrier recommended by most wildlife-control experts is the one that Marty describes as the "gulag look": you surround your whole property with an eight-foot-tall fence of heavy wooden posts and woven wire. A four-foot-tall woven wire fence can also be effective, but only if you top it with a strand of electrified wire. Either way, the neighbors are sure to complain.

That's why you are going to use our easy and cheap method of deer diversion. It begins in the attic, where you'll find your old fishing reel. Strip off the monofilament line and stretch it from tree to tree around your garden; if you are treeless, you can pound in 8-foot-tall posts at 20-foot intervals and tie the fishing line to these. Run a line about a foot above the ground, then stretch another line a foot higher, and another a foot higher, until you reach six to eight feet. If the local deer population is not too dense—and you'll soon find out if it is—you may find that just barring the side of the yard through which the deer normally enter is sufficient to redirect their steps.

The effectiveness of the fishing line seems to lie in its near-invisibility; deer hate to be grabbed by things they cannot see. But they have to know that a barrier is there, so Tom ties strips of yellow ribbon to the lines at three-foot intervals. That looks so festive, too.

On Donder, on Blitzen, on Wiener, on Schnitzel, Bambi, Thumper, and all the rest. And don't come back.

—TOM CHRISTOPHER AND MARTY ASHER

### THE GAME PLAN




**1** **Make sure that it's actually deer that are eating your plants. Deer tear off leaves and twigs, leaving a ragged edge, while rabbits and woodchucks nip them off, leaving clean cuts.**

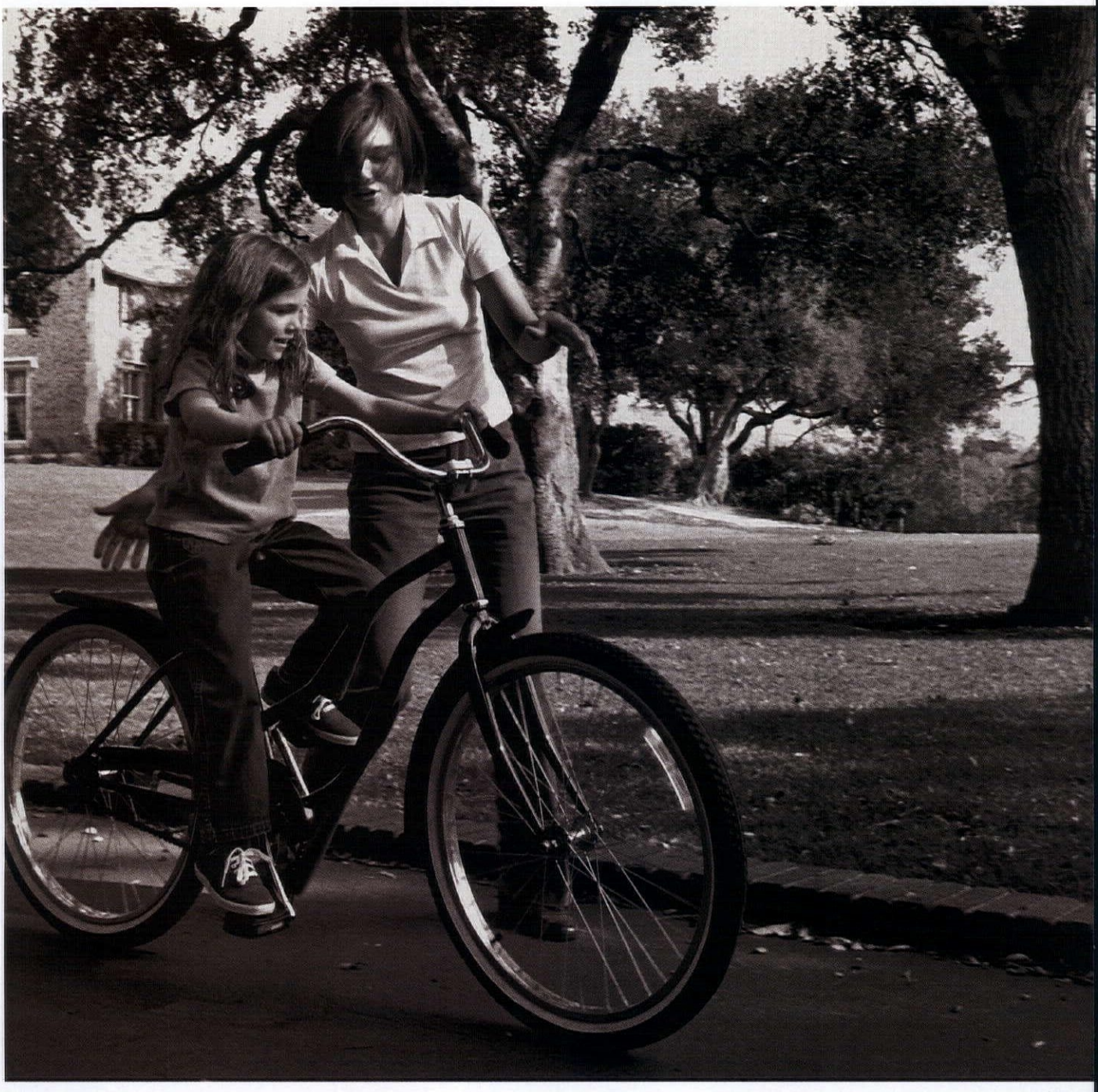



**2** **You can reinforce any barrier by hanging pairs of aluminum pie pans along a string and suspending them between stakes outside the fence. The noise, glitter, and motion the pans make as the wind blows them about frighten the deer.**




**3** **For further protection from deer damage, cover individual shrubs or flower beds with fine plastic netting (which is sold as bird netting at most garden centers).**

ILLUSTRATIONS: STEVEN GUARNACCIA



# You never

## actually own a Patek Philippe.

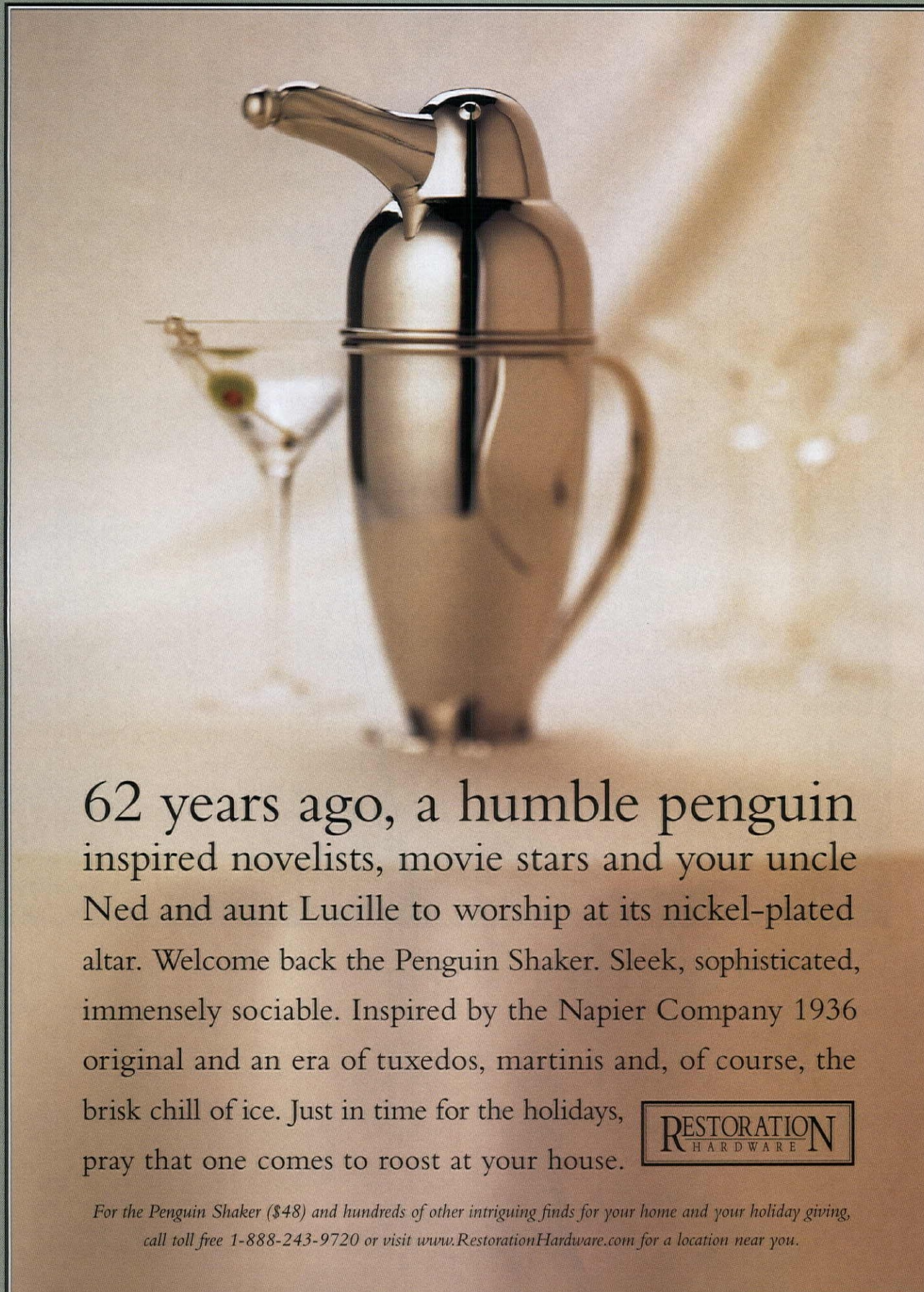
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# Hunting & Gathering

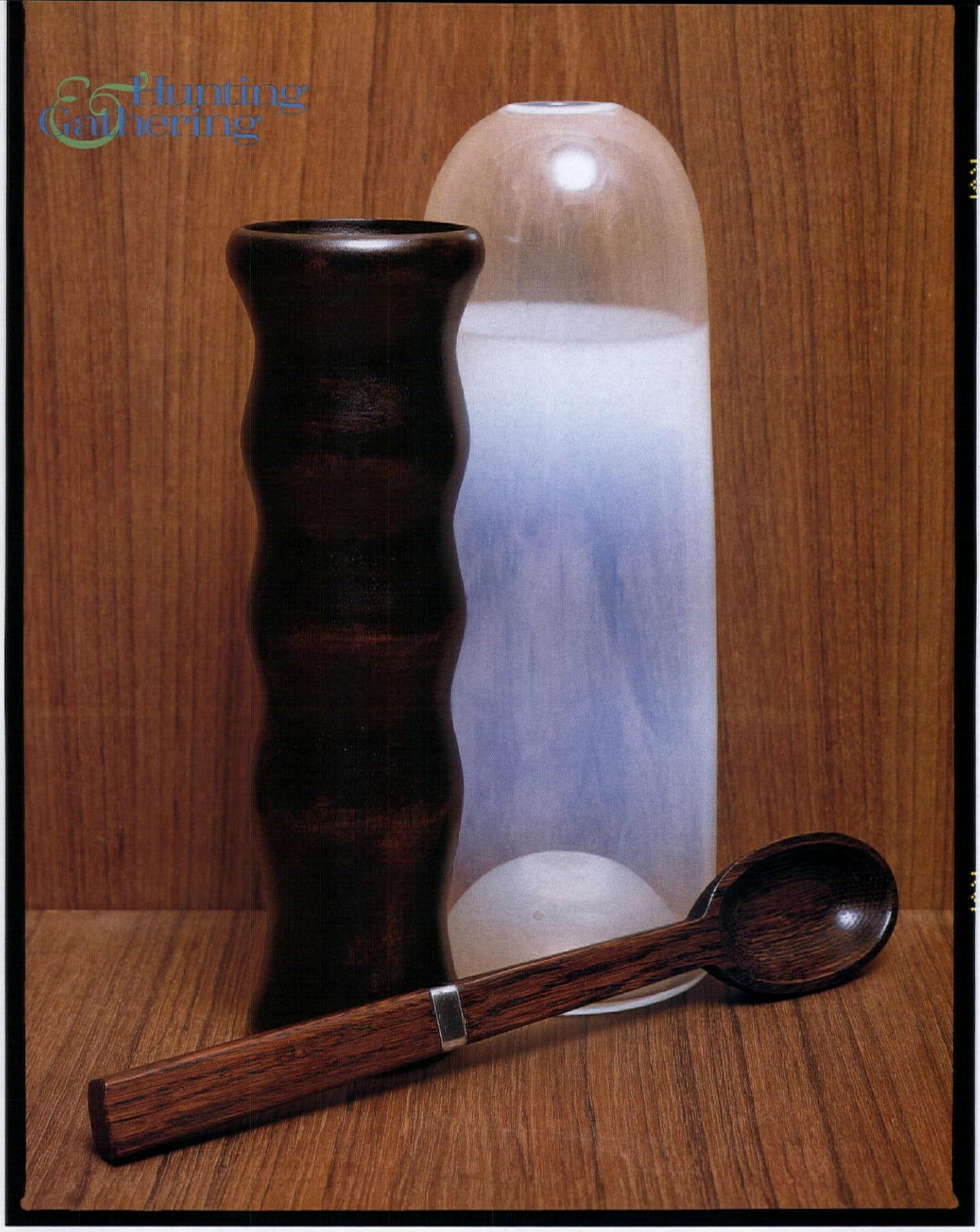


SNOWY WOODS Salad bowl, $150, from the Dark Oak series, is from Calvin Klein Home. 800-294-7978. Opalescent glass flute, $33, made in Japan, is through Dandelion/Tampopo. 888-548-1968. Bui tumbler, $40, designed by John Pomp, is available through Aero, Ltd., NYC. 212-966-1500.

# into the woods

On tabletops this season, richly textured wood is paired with **delicate** glass, like a log cabin in the snow. Call it organic **minimalism**, when the warmth of a natural element fuses with the **strength** of a man-made material. Calvin Klein's fall collection features **exotic** woods in deep tones. A dark-stained bowl offers a **soft edge**.

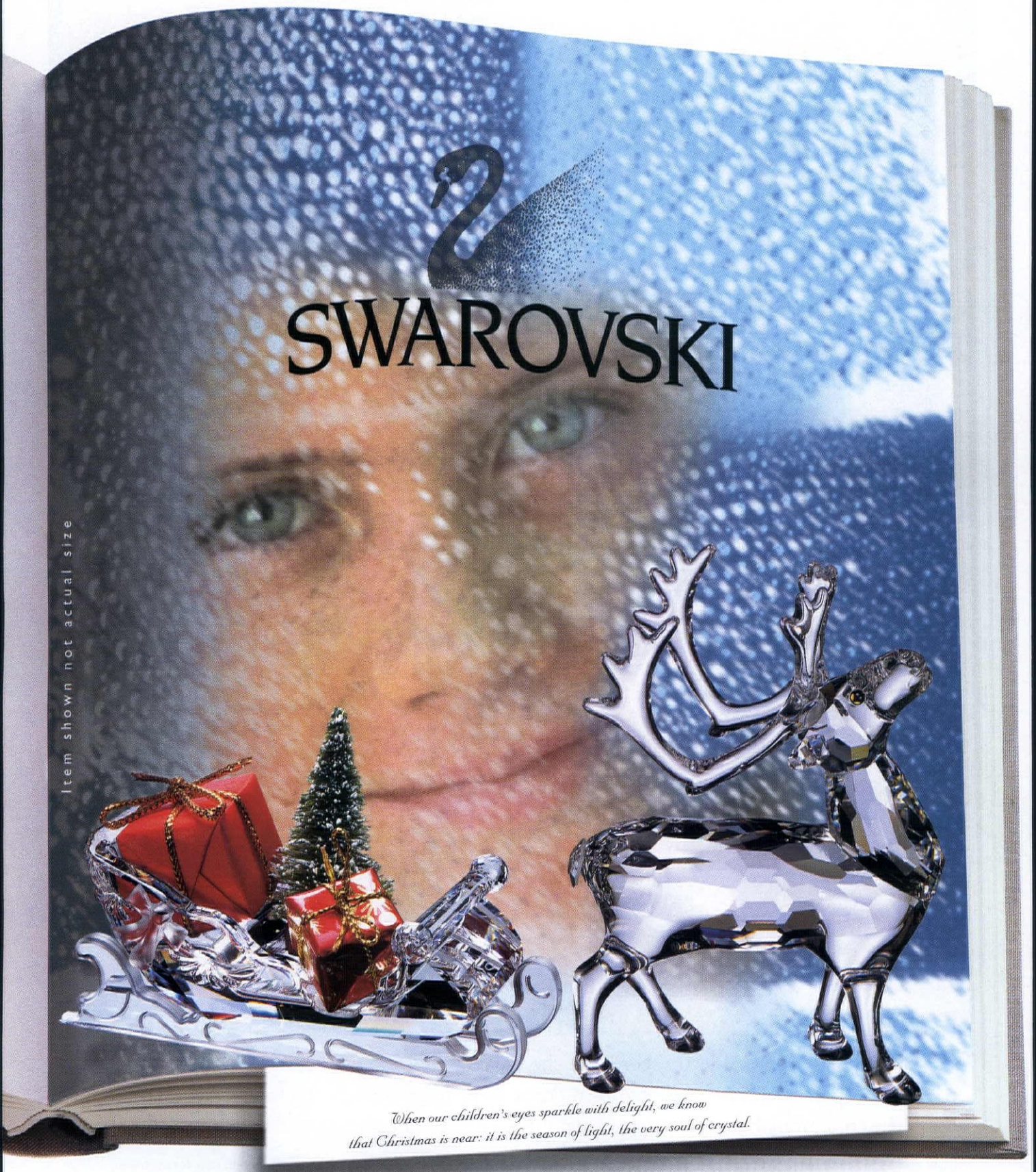
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CLEAN AND SPARE, the bowl complements of-the-moment minimalist decor. A simple wooden spoon, part of Klein's tabletop collection, becomes sophisticated when it is wrapped with a metal band. Designers are turning to darker shades of wood just now, and when you add

**TALL AND FROSTED** **The Shui vase, $295 to $395, is made of opalescent glass and is designed by John Pomp. Available through Aero, Ltd. Hand-carved mango-wood vase, $28, stained a mahogany color, is made by artisans in Thailand. Available through Felissimo. 800-565-6785. Salad-spoon server, $50 for a pair, is from the Dark Oak Series by Calvin Klein Home.**

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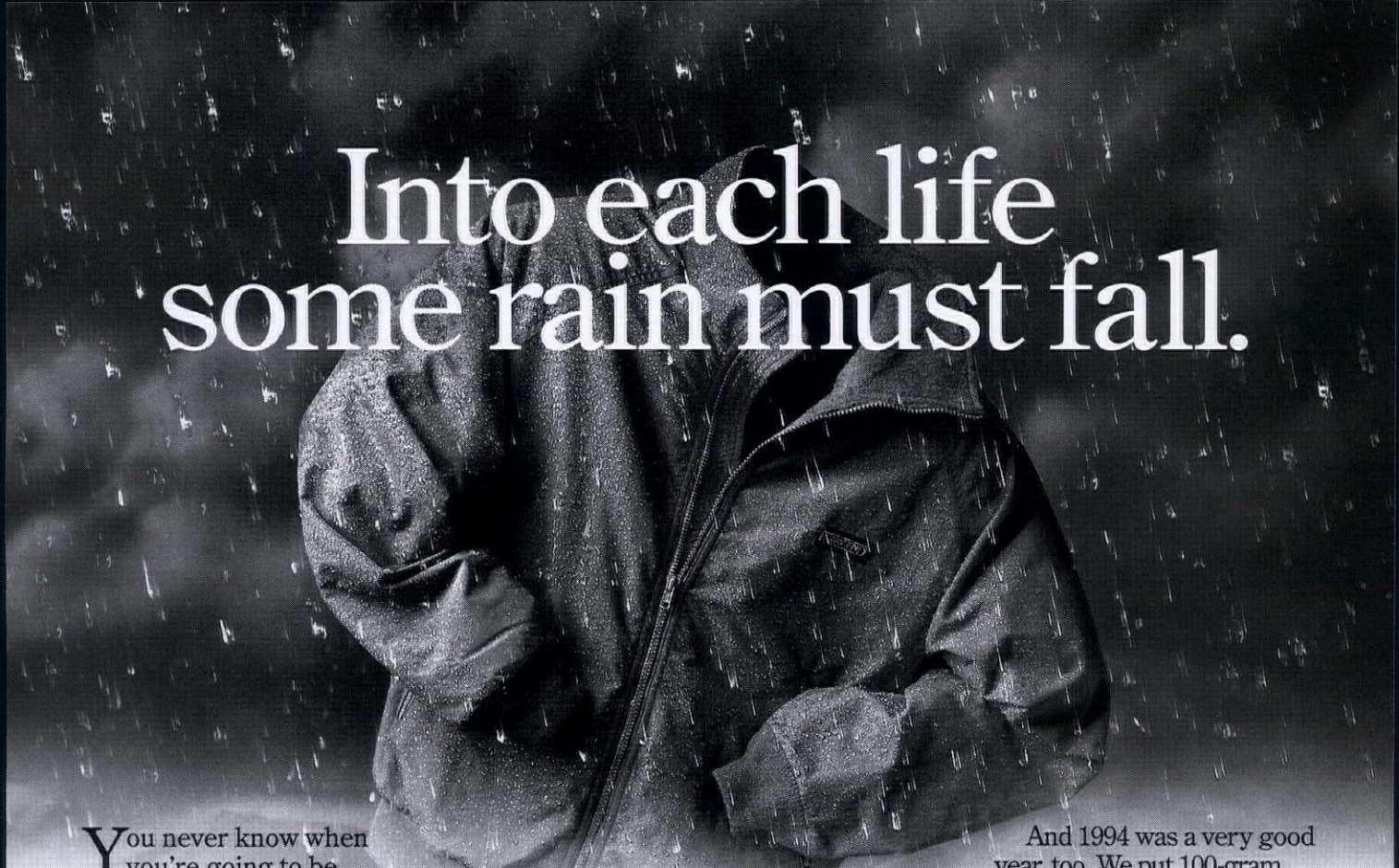

# CRYSTAL WONDER



handblown glass, the tabletop scene has the balance of a snowy forest. It may be surprising to find an opalescent glass vase by John Pomp next to an undulating mango-wood cylinder that's the color of mahogany, or a place mat made of black cocobolo wood from tropical Central

**RED WOODS** **Small bowl, $70, and placemat, $100, are made of tropical cocobolo woods from Central America. They are both designed by Gabriela Valenzuela Hirsch for Heartwood and distributed by Robert Greenfield, Ltd. Heartwood candlestick, $48, made of driftwood and naturally felled rain-forest trees, is also designed by Gabriela Vanezuela Hirsch and is available through Portico Home. 888-759-5616. Saltcellar, $50, is from the Dark Oak Series by Calvin Klein Home.**

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America beneath white salt crystals in an oak saltcellar, but each setting is a harmonious blend of hard and soft. Kiri-wood trivets, painted with ceruse, are dramatically layered among glass candleholders, both by Aero. Similarly, bowls by Newell Glass lie comfortably next to a Heartwood

**PILE 'EM HIGH** **The glass vinegar cruet is part of the Armadillo oil and vinegar/salt and pepper set, $475, designed by John Hardy. The tops for the set (not shown) are sterling silver and precious palm wood from Bali. Available through ViewPoint Showrooms. 800-2J-HARDY. Kiriwood trivets, $20 to $25, made of cerused kiriwood from Japan, are stacked with handblown candleholders, $45 each, made in Sweden. The trivets and candleholders are available through Aero, Ltd.**

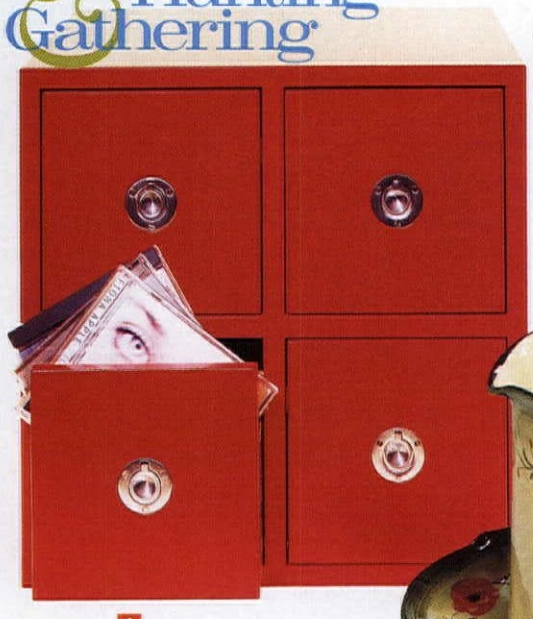


bowl. The appeal of these combinations arises from their being both rustic and fragile. Put a wood salad bowl on top of a Venetian glass platter for a warm table that's also cool. The weather outside may be frightful, but this new natural pairing is delightful.—HOPE MEYERS

**LIGHT ROUNDS** **Small stacking bowl, $55, made of tropical mora wood from Central America, is designed by Gabriela Valenzuela Hirsch, manufactured by Heartwood, and distributed by Robert Greenfield, Ltd. The Pulled Olive bowl, left, and the Round Olive bowl, $40 each, are designed by Samantha Sweet and handmade of frosted and clear glass by Newell Glass in the United Kingdom. Available through Material Possessions, Chicago and Winnetka, IL. 312-280-4885, 847-446-8840. Sources, see back of book.**

# what's news

## These finds have a geometry that's all their own. And the hues are hip



1



2



3






4



5



7

6

**1. BUDDHA CHEST**
Zen Box, made of wood and chrome by Semolina Furniture Co., also comes in bronze, blue, and white. Available through Big Pagoda Company. 877-272-4632.

**2. FLOWER RINGS**
Poppy pattern on the Provençal pitcher, $70, and a matching tray, $45 is designed by Atelier Du Sage and made in France. Both are available through Campagna Home. 800-810-0850.

**3. STICK 'EM UP**
Alec Drummond designed this tape dispenser and Post-it note holder in sculpture stone for Petra Desk Tools. Both are available through Arcaseum in NYC.

**4. PERFECT PALETTE**
From Le Corbusier's Polychromie architecturale are Color Cards, $60, designed by Arthur Rüegg and made in Switzerland. Distributed in the U.S. by Princeton Architectural Press through Chronicle Books. 800-722-6657.

**5. OVAL OFFICE**
Castiglia Associates in Poggibonsi, Italy, designed the Circle sofa, which may be upholstered in any fabric or in leather. All inquiries through Loewenstein, Pompano Beach, FL. 954-960-1100.

**6. COLORFUL COVERAGE**
The Brickwork rug, $1,800, is a tightly spun Swedish cotton. Designed and made by Jeanne Heifetz, author of *When Blue Meant Yellow: How Colors Got Their Names*. Available through A Loomful of Hues, NYC. 212-691-2821.

**7. BOWL ME OVER**
The Quadro, in small, $40, medium, $60, and large, $80, can be used as bowls or votives. Available through Royal Copenhagen. 800-431-1992.

2, SCOTT DRICKEY; 4, ERAN OFFEK. SOURCES SEE BACK OF BOOK.




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# Object Lesson




**FLIP YOUR LID** Steinway's largest piano, the nine-foot Model D concert grand with an ebony case, $77,800, sits in splendor in the firm's Manhattan showroom. Steinway & Sons, 800-235-1045.

# how to buy a piano

The biggest thing in living rooms now isn't a large-screen TV, but a piano. Sales are **soaring**. If you're in the market for one, don't panic: there are **technicians for hire** to guide you. And don't forget to **listen**—with your ear and your heart.

WRITTEN BY KATRINE AMES  PHOTOGRAPHED BY DAVID SAWYER

PRODUCED BY NEWELL TURNER

# Object Lesson



Let mathematicians praise pi, and self-help gurus sing the power of one. The most resonant number in our civilization is 88. For almost everyone, those three staccato syllables immediately summon up the piano. Eighty-eight slivers of black and white, any one of which, with the slight pressure from a finger on even the clumsiest hand, can produce the sort of magic that makes strong men weep.

They've seen that reaction at Klavierhaus Inc. in New York City, a jewel of a piano sales and restoration shop, located in an old warehouse near Lincoln Center. Filled with gorgeous instruments—Steinways, Bösendorfers, Pleyels—in various states of repair, the business is lovingly tended by two Hungarian-born brothers, Sujatri and Gabor Reisinger. Lately, hard-nosed Wall Streeters have been coming to Klavierhaus and sitting down to play. "They are the nicest customers," says Sujatri. "They cry. The rush after money kills them, and they're going back to something that feeds the soul."

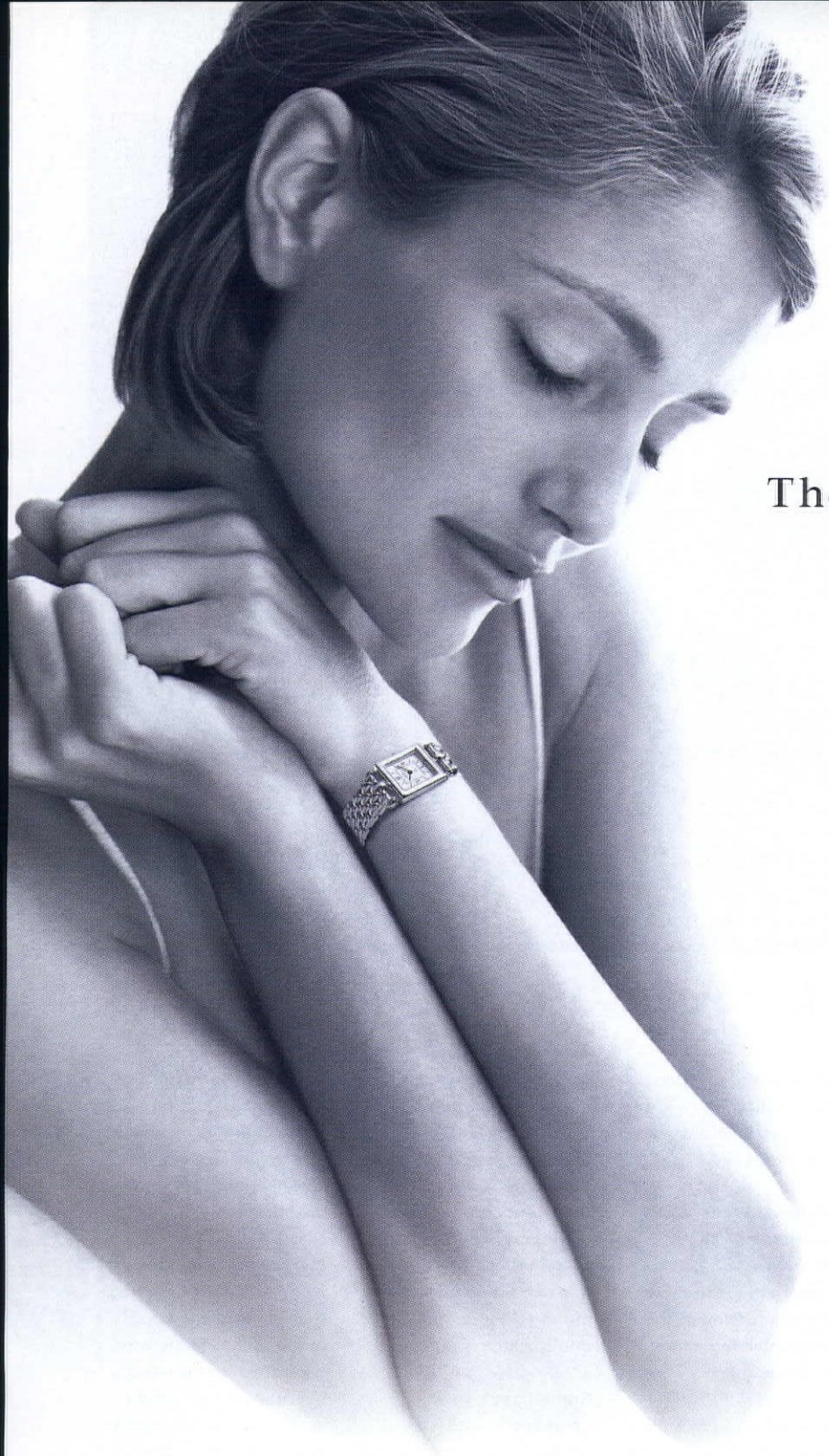
"I walked over to a grand and tried the touch. It was **silky** and quick. 'Oh, that's what I want,' I thought" —NOAH ADAMS, *Piano Lessons*

Until this century, the piano was a sign that prosperity and culture had arrived in a home. "'Tis wonderful how soon a piano gets into a log-hut on the frontier," Ralph Waldo Emerson wrote in 1870. With the arrival of cars, movies, radio, TV, the instrument's popularity plummeted. But now, just as the piano is turning 300 years old, weepy Wall Streeters and other Americans are returning to it. In 1997, according to the National Association of Music Merchants, sales of acoustic pianos rose more than 12 percent, the biggest leap in two decades. "It's pure demographics," says Leo Spellman, director of advertising and public relations for Steinway & Sons. "It's baby boomers turning forty-five or fifty who are rediscovering the piano, and it's the baby boomlet, kids seven to nine." When parents buy an instrument for their children, Spellman says, "It's also a reward for themselves."

It is, of course, a pricey reward. Steinway's basic baby grand, for example, costs $30,300. If you're going to invest in something that goes for as much as your Lexus, you probably need help. (And if looking under a car's



**TICKLE THOSE IVORIES** **A keyboard should rise slightly—about three millimeters—in the middle, the section that suffers the most wear and tear. If you want ivory keys rather than plastic ones, you must buy an old piano like the one above, a fully restored 1893 satinwood artcase Broadwood, $48,000, made in England. The restored 1891 artcase Beckstein, left, is rosewood with marquetry and was manufactured in Germany. "There's no way that kind of craftsmanship can be duplicated now," says restoration expert Sujatri Reisinger. Both instruments, Klavierhaus Inc., NYC. By appointment. 212-873-3083.**



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# Object Lesson

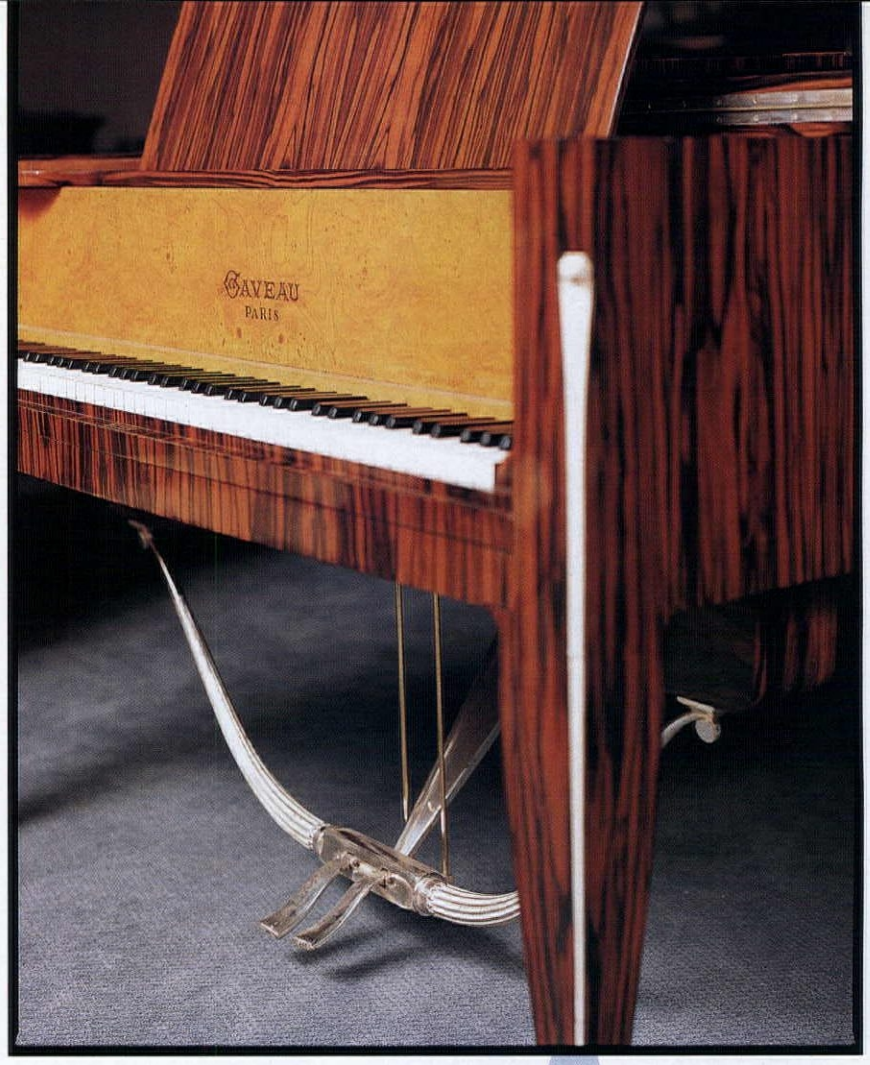
**BEYOND BASIC BLACK** **There's renewed interest in unique, pre-1930 artcase pianos in exotic woods—like the 1925 Art Deco gem in amboina, right, by Jacques-Emile Ruhlmann, $575,000, from Maximiliaan's House of Grand Pianos, Inc., NYC. 800-PIANO-07. "People spend so much time and effort furnishing a home now," says Maximiliaan Rutten. "They don't want a standard black piano. Artcase pianos involve a lot of skills we hold dear—furniture making, carving, painting." Piano interiors are gorgeous, too, as in the Model B grand, below, $58,000, from Steinway.**

hood gives you pause, consider this: a grand piano has more than 12,000 parts.) Still, there are some easy rules of thumb for would-be piano owners, not to mention a wonderful, forthright manual, *The Piano Book,* by Larry Fine (Brookside Press, $16.95).

First, how big a piano can your house and budget bear? Here, size does matter: the larger the instrument, the better the sound. If you have room, says Steve Brady, editor of *The Piano Technicians Journal,* "it makes sense to go into debt for a piano. Ten years from now, it's probably going to be worth more than you paid for it. It's a lifetime purchase."

If a grand piano is out, choose an upright (known in the trade as a vertical). A new Steinway sells for $13,900; a Yamaha for $6,600—about 40 percent less than Yamaha's baby grand. You can trade up later, and you will often get






## The Anatomy of a Piano

HAMMER
**A felt-covered wooden mallet that strikes a string to produce a note when a key is touched.**

DAMPER
**A wooden tongue, also covered in felt, that rises from a string as a hammer strikes it, then falls back to "damp" the sound, and keep a note from lingering.**

ACTION
**The complex mechanism between each key and its complementary strings that activates the hammer and damper.**

PLATE
**The iron frame to which the strings are attached. Also known as the harp, it enables the strings to bear enormous pressure.**

SOUNDBOARD
**The heart and perhaps the most important part of the piano: a shallow dome of wood, usually spruce, that acts as an amplifier.**

BRIDGES
**Wooden supports situated between the strings and the soundboard to transmit vibrations from one to the other. The treble end of a piano has a long, curved bridge; the bass end's bridge is shorter.**

SPEAKING LENGTH
**Sometimes known as sounding length, the section of each string that is located between the pins and vibrates.**

HITCH PIN
**The metal pin that holds one end of a string secure.**

WREST PIN
**A screwlike steel pin around which the other end of a string is wrapped. The tension (and thus the pitch) of a string is adjusted here.**

PIN BLOCK
**The layered and bonded wooden block, often made of maple, in which tuning pins are set. A badly made pin block means trouble.**

CASE
**The cabinet, or exterior wooden parts (including the rim, top, and legs), of the piano. The prototypical veneer is ebony, but many other woods may be used. The choice does not affect sound quality.**

KEY BED
**The wooden panel that supports both the action and the keyboard.**

LYRE
**On a grand piano, the construction that holds the pedals.**

SPINE
**The long, uncurved side of a grand piano.**


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# Object Lesson










**CAN YOU MEND A BROKEN HARP?** **At Klavierhaus Inc., piano repair and restoration goes on almost around the clock. Supple wooden poles, or bows, top left, apply gentle pressure to help mold the spruce soundboard into a convex form. Gabor Reisinger restores a soundboard by "shimming" a crack with a hand plane, above. During restoration, the iron frames, called harps or plates, left, to which strings are attached, are removed, and later reinstalled. Sujarti Reisinger uses a file, far left, to shape a piano's felt-covered hammers. Watching a piano being made is fascinating. Steinway runs free guided tours of its factory in Queens, NY, once a month. Call 800-783-4692 for details.**

back as much as you originally paid.

There are fine used pianos—some even better than new—on the market, but approach them with caution. Buying from an owner may save money, but you won't get a dealer warranty. Wherever you shop, you need to ask where the piano has been, who used it, has it been cared for, when was it last tuned. Cachet can be a liability. That model from the Juilliard School may have been played by a Horowitz-to-be, but it's probably been pounded to death. If the charming

"Voicing is what brings a piano into the world of music. Before that, it's physics"

—SUJATRI REISINGER, piano restorer, Klavierhaus Inc.

# it all adds up

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Object Lesson

# Where should you put it?

**A piano is a difficult thing to ignore, even when no one is playing it. Some decorators and designers like to place a few items on top—photographs, a lamp; some prefer to leave it bare. The much more important question is where to put the instrument (keeping in mind that ideally it should not be near a window or heat). Barbara Barry thinks pianos "generally find their own place, or they don't belong"; Dan Carrithers says it depends on how you use the room. Others are more precise. "Facing the room, with the curved side exposed to view," Orlando Diaz Azcuy says. Sheila Camera Kotur suggests "as far from the entrance as possible—the size diminishes when it is far away." Alexandra Champalimaud believes that "a piano needs to float and must not be stuffed in a corner." But David Easton says, "Corners are best. Never put it in the middle of the room or make it a focal point, unless you're opening a bar and grill." So much for harmony.**

**MARQUETRY GARDEN** **Steinway now offers pianos in a choice of eight woods, though it's hard to compete with the intricacy of this 1906 rosewood grand, above, with marquetry patterns of musical instruments, $115,000, from Maximiliaan's House of Grand Pianos, Inc. "The marquetry is so precise," Maximiliaan Rutten says. "It's almost geometric." If that's too rich for your blood, try Yamaha's polished ebony U5 upright, $12,695, below. Yamaha. 800-711-0745.**




but not top-of-the-line old upright you found needs to be rebuilt—pass.

A piano must appeal immediately to your ear and your heart. "Everyone should go after the sound first," says Gabor Reisinger of Klavierhaus Inc. Everyone has an individual response to music, so go with what *you* like, not what someone else tells you is heaven. Because a piano sounds best when its lid is up, Fine recommends you try a piano with the lid down—the way you'll usually play it. An instrument that gives almost, but not precisely, the sound you want can be adjusted by a "voicer"—an artist who regulates the action of the keys, and softens or hardens the felt on the hammers.

Touch is almost as important as tone. Play every key, and feel for sticky or squishy action. "It should feel as if there is no obstacle between you and musical expression," Brady says. Check for gradations in volume—the more the better—by playing a note softly and then increasingly harder. Listen for notes that are out of tune and for buzzes and rattles. "That can tell you a lot more than a look inside," Brady says. Do that, too, of course. One simple test is to pluck a string in the upper register and run your finger along several strings. If the sound doesn't ring out, move on. Check the hammer response (firm, not floppy), and see that the wires on the tuning pins line up evenly. Once you find a piano you love, call in a pro to give it a thorough exam—a cracked soundboard, for instance, isn't easy for the amateur to spot and can be very serious. It's best to hire a registered piano technician, who will have at least passed a basic test. Get recommendations from friends.

Last, if buying a piano without knowing how to play one seems too fanciful, remember it's never too late to learn. Noah Adams, host of the National Public Radio show *All Things Considered,* bought a piano at 51, before he knew how to use it—an adventure chronicled in his 1996 book, *Piano Lessons.* What happened when he finally played Schumann's *Träumerei* for his wife? She cried. So did he.

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# Taking the Heat

**For years, hardiness maps have tracked a plant's resistance to cold. Now a new map outlines the zones that can wilt and torch it**

BY TOM CHRISTOPHER

Few men can claim to have redrawn the map of the United States. H. Marc Cathey has done it twice. In the 1980s, as director of the National Arboretum, he revamped the United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Plant Hardiness Map, which changed the way that gardeners select plants. But times change, too, and last year, as president emeritus of the American Horticultural Society (AHS), Cathey published the AHS Plant Heat-Zone Map. (The book Cathey and Linda Bellamy wrote to accompany the map, *Heat-Zone Gardening*, appeared this past winter.) Both a complement and a rebuttal to his earlier effort, this new map reflects a fundamental shift in American gardening.

Both maps share the same goal: to guide gardeners to those plants that will withstand the extremes of the local climate. "Hardy" is the traditional horticultural jargon for such plants. This sounds straightforward, but like most other aspects of Cathey's craft, this term is highly subjective; like common plant names, the meaning of "hardy" changes with the gardener and the circumstances. So although Cathey's two maps both deal with plant hardiness, their perspectives are diametrically opposed.

For the older map, hardiness lies in resistance to cold—what gardeners in the North worry about at this season of the year. The USDA Plant Hardiness Map divides the United States into 11 geographic zones, distinguishing the various regions by the lowest temperature each experiences in an average winter. In its earliest version (this map dates to 1960) and for more than three decades, it has been a standby of the nursery industry. Catalogues and garden centers use it as a tool for reassuring novice gardeners and for protecting adventurous ones. If, for example, you garden in Davidson, North Carolina (Cathey's boyhood home), you can feel confident about buying a camellia advertised as hardy to zone 7 (your zone). If you garden 100 miles farther west, though, up in the mountains in Asheville, which is in zone 6, you

ILLUSTRATION: KAREN BARBOUR

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may still buy the camellia, but with the map's help, you know you are gambling.

Of course, to classify plants this way, solely on the basis of their tolerance for cold, is rank regional prejudice. In most of the Southeast and Southwest, the extreme season is summer, and the greatest challenge to garden plants is not the moderate midwinter frosts, but the extreme highs of midsummer. Even in many northern regions of the interior, though winters are cold, summers are blazingly hot, and which is the greater challenge to plantings may be a toss-up. So it seems odd that for a generation after the first appearance of the map, hardly anyone complained. Californians ignored it, preferring an elaborate 24-zone system developed by Sunset Publishing, but the USDA hardiness zones ruled virtually everywhere else.

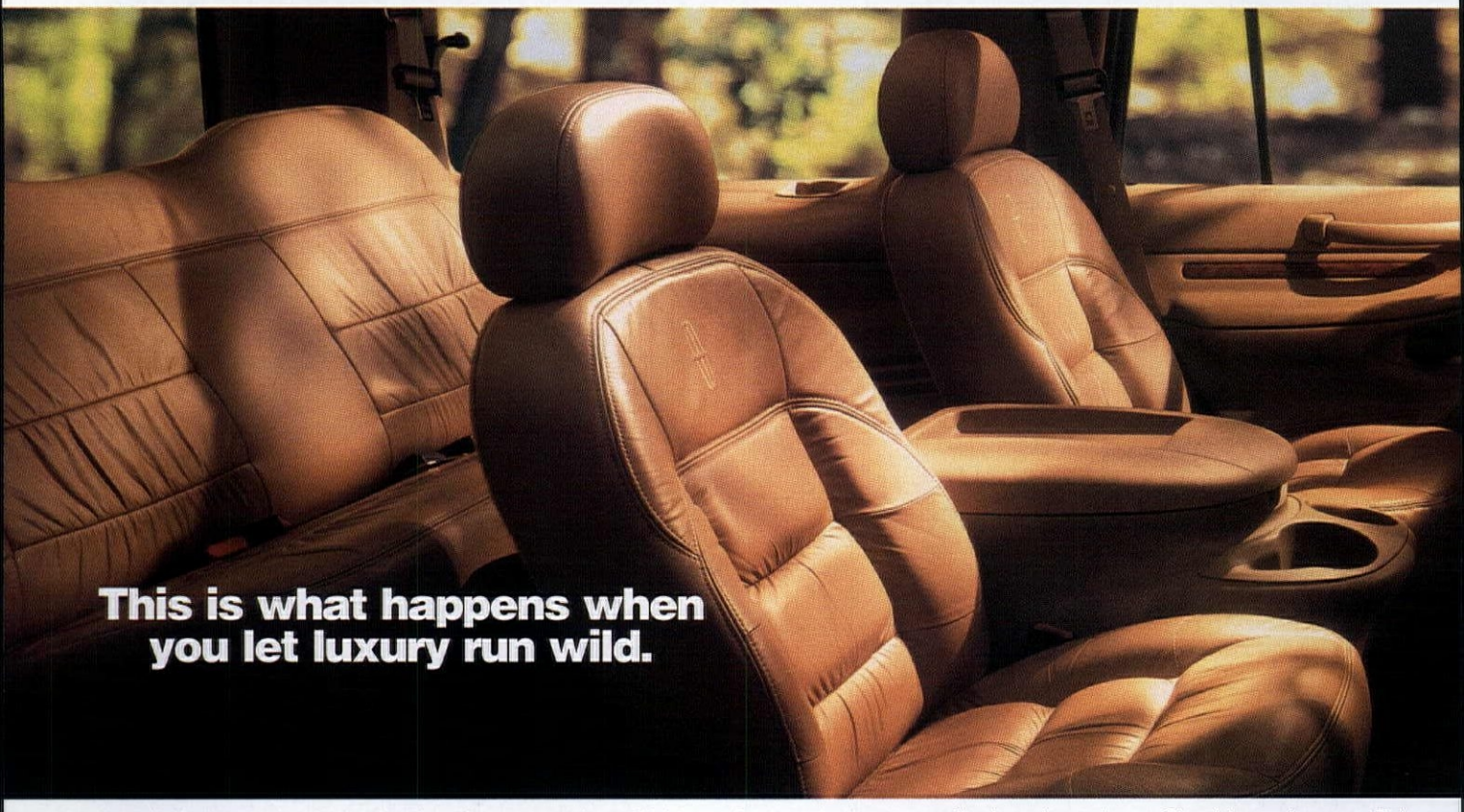
In part, the easy surrender to a northern-biased hardiness map reflected the Anglophilia of that generation of American gardeners. As anyone who has shivered through an English August can testify, British gardeners don't worry about summer temperatures. That island, after all, lies on the same parallel as Labrador. The Royal Horticultural Society's *Dictionary of Gardening* allots three pages of close-set type to hardiness, yet dismisses the threat of heat in one offhand phrase.

THE TRIUMPH of the cold-based map also bespoke the horticultural domination of the Northeast. If you factor out *Sunset*-loyal California, the Northeast in 1960 was where the great public gardens were, where the gardening encyclopedias were written, and most importantly, where the big market for garden plants was. Cathey may have grown up gardening in the South, but he studied horticulture at Cornell.

That doesn't mean he forgot what he'd learned as a boy from his grandmother next door, and as he spoke to gardening groups over the years, he gradually realized that gardeners didn't want "the expensive Cornell answer; they wanted the cheap Miz Nanny answer."

They also wanted answers that worked for them. As the Sunbelt boomed in the 1980s, there arose a huge constituency of gardeners for whom the old plant hardiness map was useless—summer hardiness is what you worry about in Phoenix and Houston. The center of gravity was moving; increasingly, new trends in American gardening, from natural gardening to Xeriscape, were emerging from areas where summer heat is the weather most likely to kill plants. And at the same time, global warming was driving up summertime temperatures even in the old map's northeastern constituency.

So Cathey, who had by now retired from the National Arboretum and joined the leadership of the American Horticultural Society, began collecting data on what he called "heat days." These are days in which the local temperature rises above 86°F, the temperature at which plants begin to suffer damage to cellular proteins. Working with the help of a meteorological consulting firm (Meteorological Evaluation Services of Amityville, New York), Cathey correlated records from 7,831 weather stations. Counting the number of heat days that occurred, on



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average, each summer at each recording station, the mapmakers developed 12 new national regions or heat zones.

With information from nurserymen, botanical garden curators, and horticultural texts, Cathey next began assigning zone numbers to plants. He already knew that heather *(Calluna vulgaris)* would tolerate winter temperatures as low as -20°F; that made it cold hardy to USDA hardiness zone 5. And it tolerates a summer with 60 to 90°F heat days. That made it heat hardy as far south as heat zone 7 (and Davidson).

To date, Cathey has assigned zones to 15,000 species and cultivars of plants. To jump-start acceptance of his new approach to hardiness, he persuaded Monrovia, a California-based nursery that is one of the world's largest, to include heat-zone coding in its catalogue and on the labels it sends out with plants to 5,000 local garden centers. Meanwhile, Cathey is barnstorming the country, delivering a talk in which he displays the new map and dwells on George Washington's sacrifice when he moved from the lush zone 7 (Mount Vernon) to serve as president in the Arctic zone 5 of New York. Abraham Lincoln, Cathey postulates, ran for president in order to transfer his gardening from the heat zone 6 of central Illinois to the more tropical zone 7 of Washington, D.C.

Cathey does not view the two hardiness maps as alternatives, but as pieces of the same puzzle. In *Heat-Zone Gardening,* he lists both cold and heat hardiness for each plant, and he expresses both as a range. Pachysandra, for instance, he lists as adapted to USDA hardiness zones 5 to 9, and AHS heat zones 8 to 3. In this way, he tries to detail the entire territory that such a plant will inhabit.

A decade ago, one number was enough to express a plant's hardiness. Now, as American gardening grows more diverse and sophisticated, we need four. Cathey is quick to point out that this is just a beginning. Consider the hybrid tea rose. With adequate irrigation, this is an easy and reliable shrub in the desert Southwest, but sickly and temperamental in areas of Florida with similar temperature profiles. The reason? The humid atmosphere of the Southeast fosters fungal diseases to which the hybrid tea is prone.

Obviously, our definition of hardiness needs to be expanded (and complicated) even more. Not to worry, though. Cathey is already planning a map of humidity and rainfall. "So don't think," says the man from zone 7, "that I am through." To order the map, call 800-777-7931, ext. 10, or write to the American Horticultural Society, 7931 East Boulevard Drive, Alexandria, VA 22308. The map is a laminated, full-color poster and costs $14.95, including shipping and handling.

## Like common plant names, the meaning of "hardy" changes with the gardener and the circumstances




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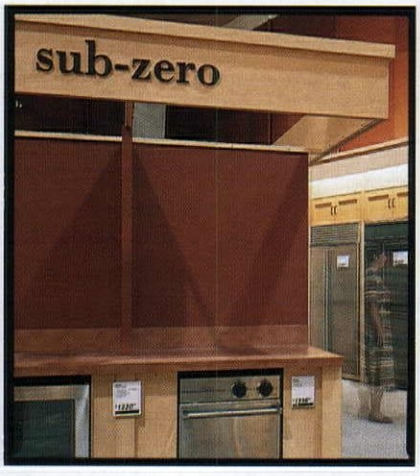

# Acres of Diamonds

## Just south of Denver, Sears has rolled out The Great Indoors, a vast emporium of home luxuries

BY SABINE ROTHMAN

More than a hundred years ago, Sears sent out what came to be known as the wish book, a catalogue that sparked farmers' desires for everything from furniture to patent medicines. Now Sears is courting a more affluent customer by rolling out The Great Indoors, a 150,000-square-foot decorating superstore outside Denver that promises one-stop shopping for high-end interiors.

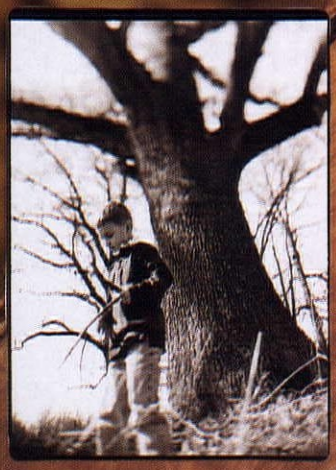
A generous harvest of premium names—Jenn-Air, Viking, Ralph Lauren, Kravet, Karastan, Robern and Bose—is available here for busy gatherers of luxury goods. "We're looking at a time-starved customer," says Susan Smith, vice president of operations. "On a typical [remodeling] project, they shop at eight stores and purchase at four and a half. It takes the average customer six to eight weeks at twenty hours per week." Not so easy when you're shuttling 2.5 children to soccer practice. Now, instead of traveling between boutiques, consumers can get plantation chairs, martini shakers, and Kohler bidets all in one place.




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So many choices might seem overwhelming, but The Great Indoors is divided into manageable quadrants based on the main rooms of the house: the Great Kitchen, the Great Bath, the Great

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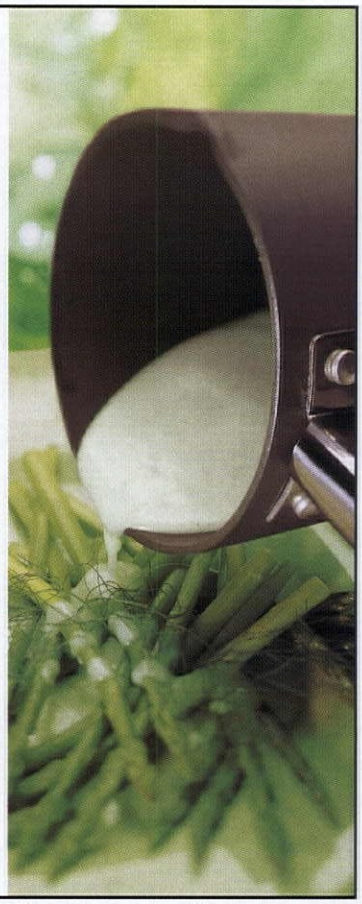
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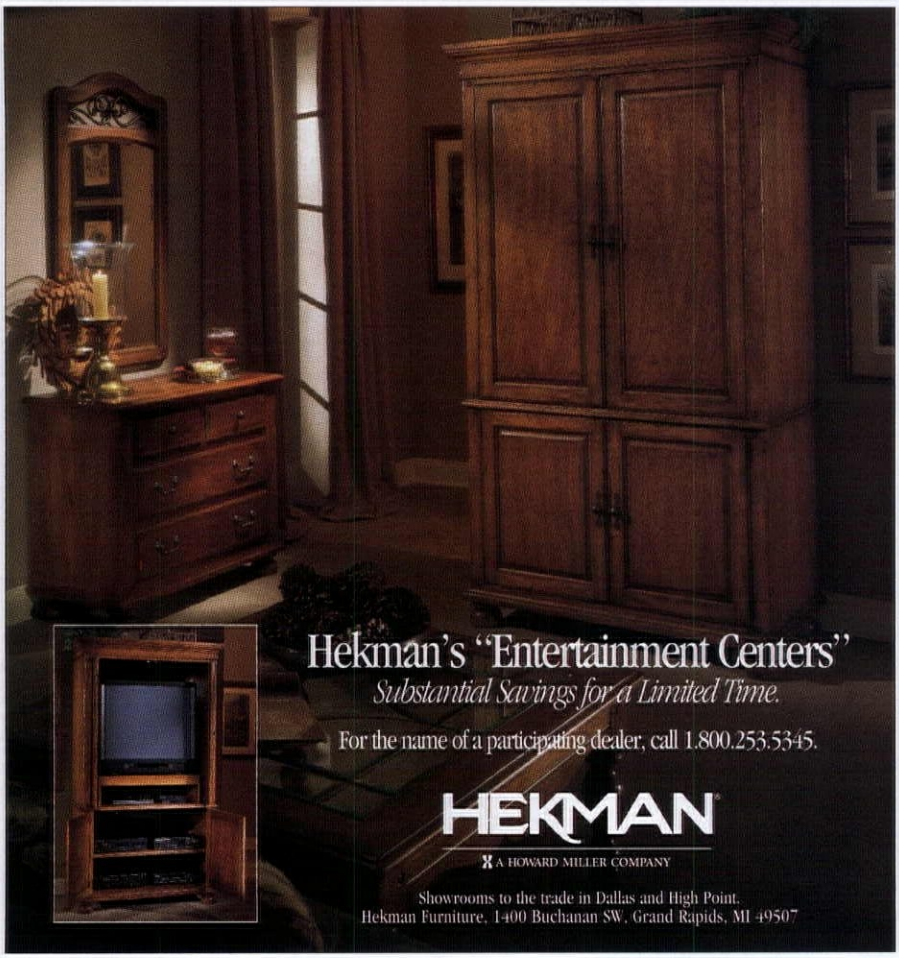
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Bedroom, and the Great Room. Along the back wall is a fifth area, the Great Surface. Major appliances—and Viking's enticing wine fridge—line the store's perimeter, while smaller ticket items (candles, towels, and trendy tabletop merchandise) meet in its center. Star brands are singled out to occupy boutique-like displays. Custom offerings include Corian countertops, California Closets, frames, and flower arrangements. Model rooms, placed centrally in each section, bridge and bring it all together. You won't be able to build walls with these materials (breathe easier, Home Depot), but you will be able to paint them in Martha Stewart colors, paper them with Waverly designs, and fill every inch of space they enclose. What's really impressive is the range of options before you. Wall ovens stretch like slot machines in Vegas, dangling price tags from Kenmore's at $1,349.99 to $4,559.99 for Thermador's double model. The must-haves of the season are also featured prominently, from environmentally sound front-loading washers to Phillips's, flat screen television for just under $15,000. "[We] want to be able to say, 'Hey, we have everything,'" Smith explains.

More than a place to shop, The Great Indoors is also ground central for ideas and advice. The model rooms help customers visualize what items will look like once they get them home (The Great Indoors will deliver and install their purchases). Staff designers use a sophisticated CAD system to render virtual rooms showing specific products, and they even make house calls. Students of design can gather for group instruction in the Great Classroom, and there's a resource-library-cum-bookstore for those who prefer solitary study. When customers get tired or hungry for more than learning, there's a cafe.

The Denver store is billed as a prototype, and if all goes well, The Great Indoors hopes to open as many as two hundred more in the next ten years. Perhaps the top of the line will end up making The Great Indoors as indispensable for affluent America as the old Sears catalogue was for their rural ancestors.

# Open house

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# Steeling Home

## Trailblazing furniture maker Paul M. Jones and his stainless-steel renderings of traditional styles are back in the spotlight

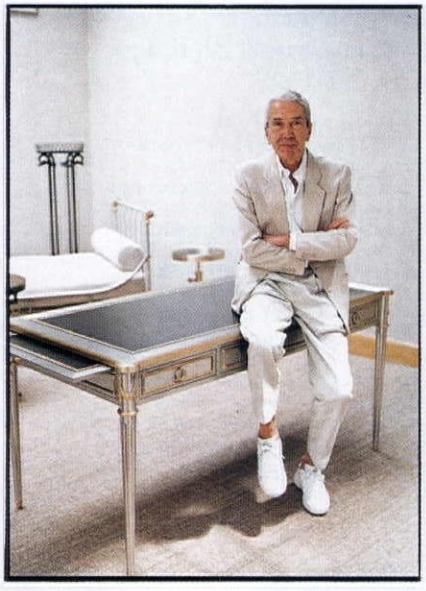
BY SUZANNE SLESIN

WHEN furniture maker Paul M. Jones was 70 years old—in 1989—he sold his business, and as he explains, "decided to take early retirement." But now that he's turning 80, he's back in business. On November 6, John Boone Inc., a to-the-trade furniture showroom in New York City, opened the exhibit "Paul M. Jones: 40 Years of Classic Design."

"When we first suggested the show to Paul, he told us not to make a big deal about it," says John Boone, co-owner, with Christopher Lockwood, of the five-year-old company. The reaction of the soft-spoken, charming Jones was no surprise to Boone, who says, "Paul is one of the most humble people I know."

But as the exhibition proves, Jones has little to be modest about. Interior design cognoscenti still fondly recall the innovative showroom Jones ran in the 1960s. It was a place where decorators and their clients could browse through new and antique furnishings, and then sit down with a designer and have an object reworked to suit their individual tastes and needs. "The showroom offered amazing custom service," says Boone. "Any antique could be translated into any size and made out of any material."

Part tribute, part savvy marketing event for the Jones designs that John Boone Inc. sells, the exhibition—which is open to the public and runs through December 4—showcases Jones's range. The approximately 200 objects in the show include styles from French Empire to the International Style that was synonymous with modernism in America in



**ALLOY-OOP Paul M. Jones poses with his stainless-steel Directoire desk; at top, his steel and brass daybed and bench.**

PHOTOGRAPHS BY ANDREW FRENCH. STYLED BY KYRA SAULNIER. SOURCES SEE BACK OF BOOK

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the 1960s and 1970s. Some pieces have been in production for years, others had remained as archival drawings in Jones's private collection. "Over the past several years, we have been involved in re-editions of some of Paul's pieces," says Boone. "But this year, we decided to concentrate on things that never got off the drawing board."

But then, it's fortunate that Jones's career in home furnishings ever got off the drawing board. In the late 1950s, the Dayton, Ohio, native worked as an editor at *Family Circle* magazine. He had little outlet for his interest in furniture design until he met Michael Greer, a leading interior decorator of the day. The two became friends, and opened a small showroom in a mid-Manhattan brownstone. Greer, who traveled frequently to Europe, stocked the place with antiques and reproductions. "He had an interest in Directoire metal furniture," recalls Jones. "And soon we found a metal factory to reproduce some of the designs." The collection expanded to include those pieces deemed necessary to a contemporary interior: consoles, gueridons, and dining tables, in a variety of sizes and finishes. Greer left the business after a few years, but Jones forged on, and in 1961 he became one of the first tenants in the Decoration and Design building. Interior decorators such as Billy Baldwin, Albert Hadley and Sister Parish, Thomas Britt, Mario Buatta, David Easton, Mark Hampton, and Joseph Braswell—some just starting out—were early clients. Of his success, Jones says simply: "People got what they wanted."



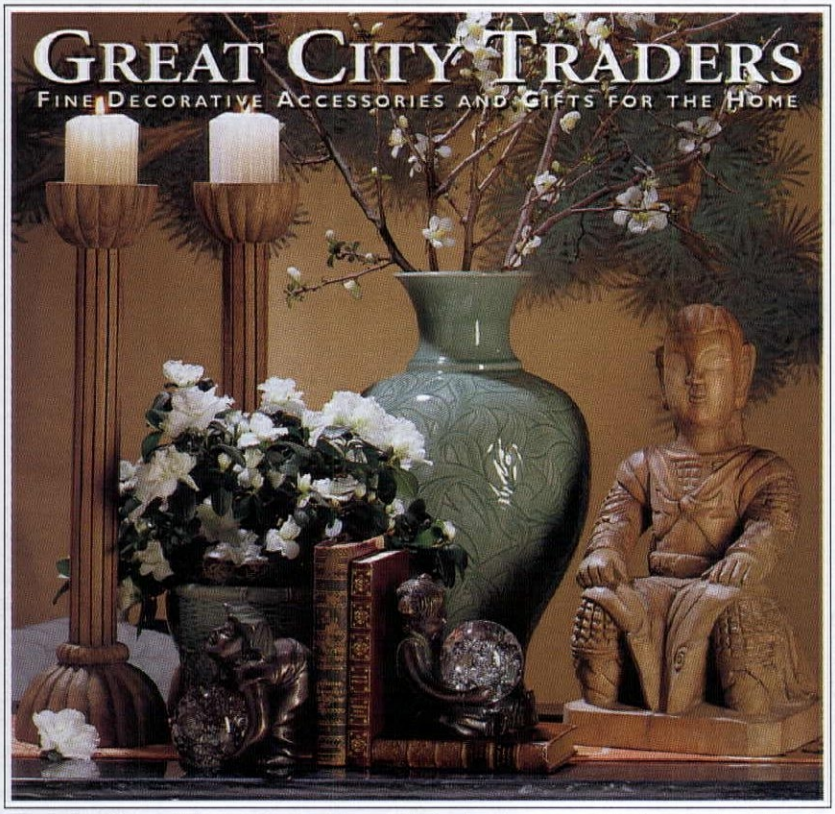


**FREE RANGE Jones pieces include a modernist console, above, with a textured finish, and a tiered coffee table, right, with engraved panels.**

That approach to custom service is still rare today, and in many ways Boone and Lockwood consider themselves disciples of the Jones method in their willingness to accommodate special requests. "We're one of the few showrooms that is still doing that kind of custom work," says Lockwood. The John Boone company pays Jones on a royalty basis, and commissions craftsmen in the New York area—many have been making Jones designs for years—to produce the furniture.

Jones's steel pieces remain the most dramatic. His original Louis XVI–style solid-stainless-steel desk with applied bronze hardware, a hand-tooled leather top, and suede-lined drawers has not been seen since the late 1950s. The 1998 version costs $22,500. A satisfyingly minimal black ash console—it now costs $4,200—is a contemporary design that was introduced in the early 1970s and has been a perennial favorite. So are the steel and solid-brass-detailed daybed, $8,550, and its matching bench, $3,330. A two-tiered Louis XVI–style low table, with a bronze and brass frame and hand-engraved French panel surfaces, is a new addition, costing $12,900.

When decorators and their clients want a little extra coddling and are willing to pay for it, the time seems right to bring back the kind of furnishings that were once much in demand by a generation of decorators. Says Boone: "We have clients who come in looking for the same things their parents had. It was the era of étagères, cocktail tables, dressing-table stools, and daybeds." Maybe it still is.




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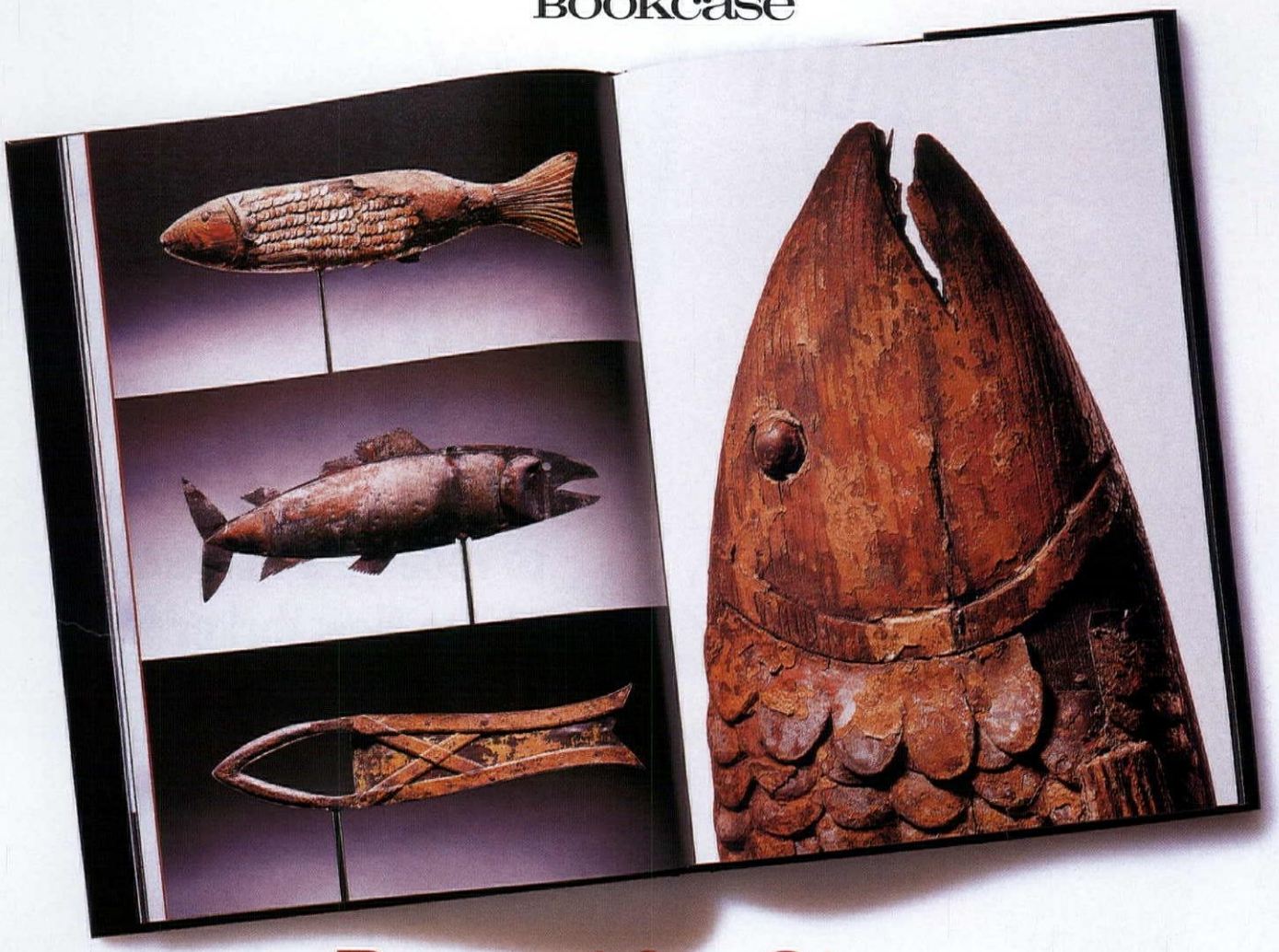
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# Bound for Glory

## From antique weather vanes to postmodern lofts, this season's gift books will open a new chapter in your design education

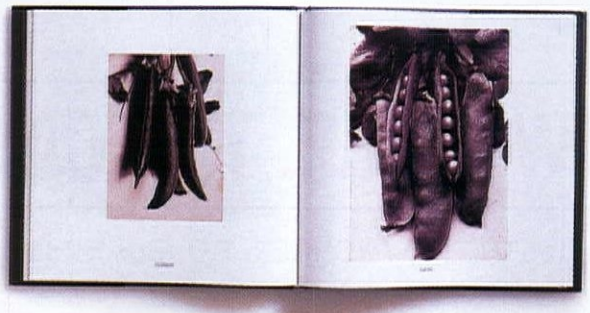
BY LYGEIA GRACE

THE BEST ILLUSTRATED books this season are feasts for the eyes and the mind. So go ahead and indulge in a scrumptious bibliophile's banquet.

One man's junk is another man's treasure. To wit: **SPIRITUALLY MOVING: A COLLECTION OF AMERICAN FOLK ART SCULPTURE (Abrams, $125)** and **PLANT KINGDOMS: THE PHOTOGRAPHS OF CHARLES JONES (Smithmark, $24.98)**. The former is an exceptional catalogue of old weather vanes, whirligigs, and decoys that many people would have discarded. But thanks to a contemporary art patron with an eye for the abstract, these lovely sculptural objects have become the centerpiece of one of the finest folk art collections in private hands.

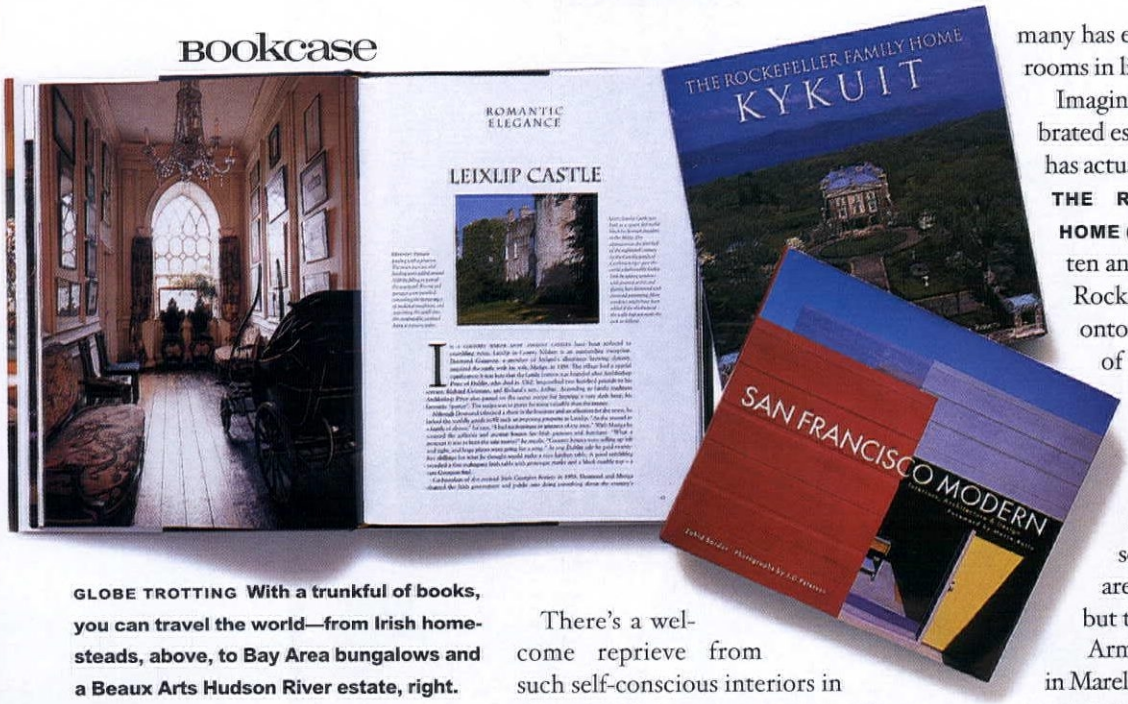
The images in *Plant Kingdoms,* probably made between 1895 and 1910, were also very nearly forsaken as rubbish. Discovered in an old trunk at a London antiques market, these gorgeous photographs of vegetables and fruit are the work of Charles Jones, an obscure English gardener. Compositions of radishes, sugar peas, and cabbages are captured in sumptuous detail—transformed, writes Alice Waters in her introduction, into "still lifes so alive that they are hardly still at all." Would that such a harvest graced our tables every night.

**THE BOOK OF FLOWERS (Flammarion, $50)** is an engaging history of our romance with all things botanical. Catherine Donzel contemplates the rarity of bouquets in medieval



**GO BACK Find finny and flavorful heirlooms in *Spiritually Moving,* above, and *Plant Kingdoms,* left.**

PHOTOGRAPHS BY CHARLES MARAIA




**GLOBE TROTTING With a trunkful of books, you can travel the world—from Irish homesteads, above, to Bay Area bungalows and a Beaux Arts Hudson River estate, right.**

households (few homes contained the tables to display them) and how the language of flowers has become "nothing more than a pleasant delusion," thanks to the incompetence of many translators of floral grammars.

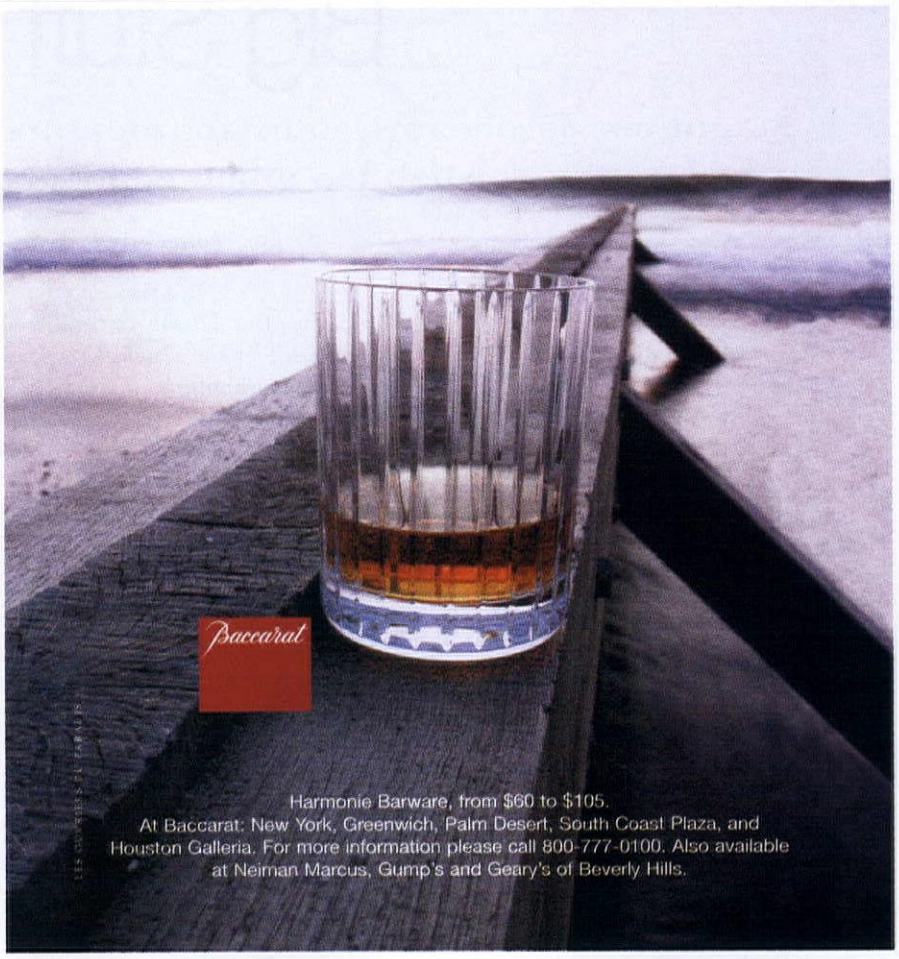
Stephen Woodhams has a decidedly modern take on the ancient art of flower arranging in his exuberant **FLOWER PALETTES (Clarkson Potter, $30)**. This star of the London flower world can be startling—he suggests displaying a stem of peppers in a beer can—or inspirational, as with his assemblage of anemones, driftwood, and stones. Woodhams dispenses tips and recounts past triumphs, all the while adhering to the principle that when you arrange flowers, color, not cultivar, should be your guide.

Eames lounge chairs are not the only thing the houses in Zahid Sardar's **SAN FRANCISCO MODERN (Chronicle, $40)** have in common. Happily, they are also united by their breezy ability to meld the indoors and out. From Dan Friedlander's chic SOMA compound to a cozy Russian River ranch by Jonathan Staub, Bay Area living has never looked so truly inviting.

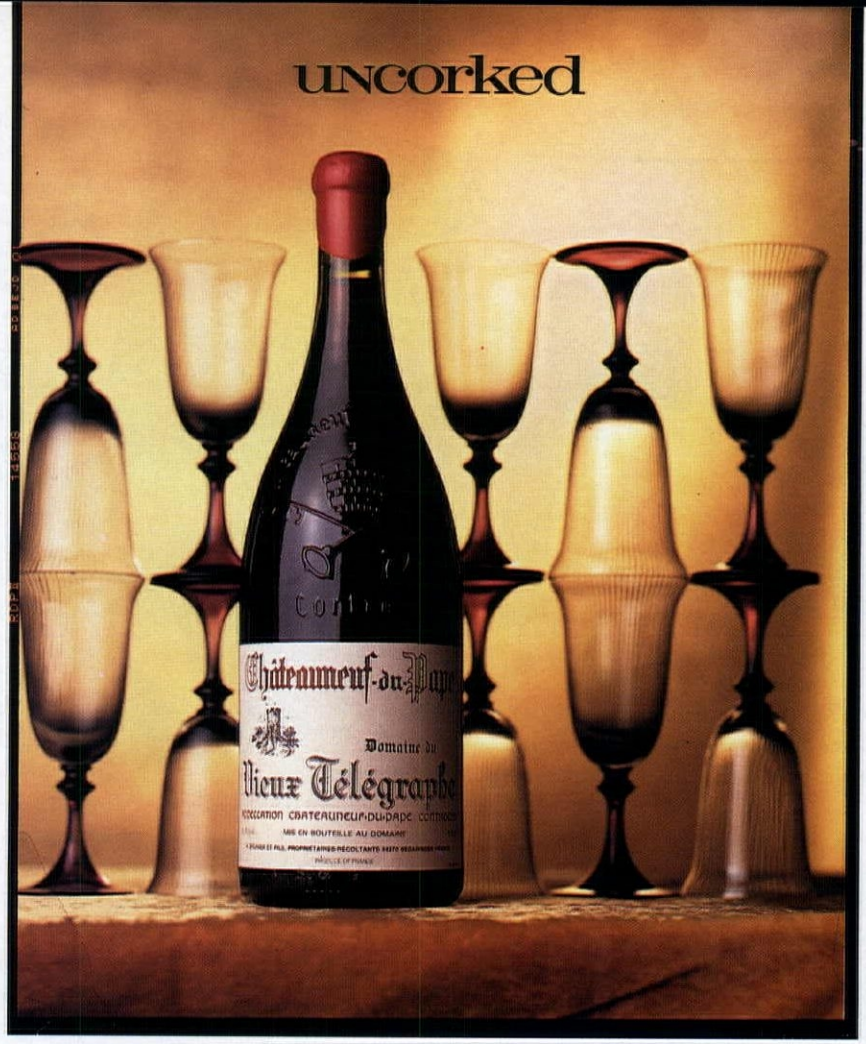
To explore a decidedly more downtown phenomenon, hoist Mayer Rus's **LOFT (Monacelli, $55)**. Here, stark expanses of concrete and plaster by architect Deborah Berke and funky digs by LOT/EK, outfitted with cabinets made of old refrigerators, prove that plenty of space is still one of the greatest luxuries.

There's a welcome reprieve from such self-conscious interiors in **THE IRISH HOME: ECLECTIC AND UNIQUE INTERIORS (Rizzoli, $45)**. From a land that specializes in "the cult of dilapidation" comes a volume of images celebrating imperfections in the business of living. Ianthe Ruthven's glowing photographs—an elegantly decrepit Dublin mansion, a comfortably cluttered cottage—and text give shape to a geography that for many has existed only as phantom rooms in literature.

Imagine a guided tour of a celebrated estate with someone who has actually lived there. **KYKUIT: THE ROCKEFELLER FAMILY HOME (Abbeville, $49.95)**, written and photographed by two Rockefeller women, takes us onto the impressive grounds of John D. Rockefeller's 1913 Beaux Arts retreat on the Hudson. Some areas, like the playhouse's dramatic tiled swimming pool and the serene Japanese teahouse, are not open to the public, but this book lets us peek in. Armchair travelers will revel in Marella Agnelli's **THE AGNELLI GARDENS AT VILLAR PEROSA (Abrams, $75)**, a stunning album of her estate outside Turin, sanctuary to generations of the Fiat dynasty. Introduced by Marella Caracciolo (Agnelli's niece and a *House & Garden* contributing editor), this beautiful book captures such delights as Russell Page's famed lake garden and an English-style woodland walk. Dig in.



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# Big Stuff

## Magnums, Jéroboams, Salmanazars, and Nebuchadnezzars—when too much is not enough

BY JAY McINERNEY

AN IMAGE OF the good life that remains fixed in my memory derives from a wedding I attended many years ago in southern Vermont. One of the guests, the best man, brought a Salmanazar of Pol Roger champagne, which seemed to me an incredibly stylish and extravagant gift. I can still see him, his tuxedo silhouetted against the white clapboard of the eighteenth-century farmhouse, staggering around the lawn with the giant green bottle in his arms, aiming it at our outstretched glasses, dousing sleeves and shoes with the overflow. I had never heard before of a Salmanazar—which contains 9 liters—nor of Pol Roger champagne. But I have remembered both names ever since, unlike those of the bride and groom.

Sometimes size matters. Big bottles are inherently festive, tokens of celebration and abundance. Like luxury cuvée champagne or first-growth bordeaux, they make a statement: something along the lines of "This is an occasion and we're going to have some serious fun." Or even "Partay!"

The standard wine bottle has been pretty consistent in size for centuries. Now fixed in most countries at 750 milliliters, the volume was probably based on the lung capacity of the average glassblower back when bottles were handblown. According to the *Oxford Companion to Wine,* "The bottle has in its time been described as a suitable ration of wine for one person at a sitting, one person per day, and two people at a sitting." Clearly, the 750 milliliter bottle is a useful format. But the magnum, which at 1.5 liters is equivalent to two bottles, is widely regarded as the best size for bottle-aging late-blooming wines like bordeaux. The thinking here is that wine in larger bottles ages more slowly than in smaller bottles, because aging is a process of oxidation, and the amount of oxygen in the neck of a regular bottle and a magnum is about the same, although the volume of wine in the magnum is twice as great. Theoretically the magnum should age about half as fast as

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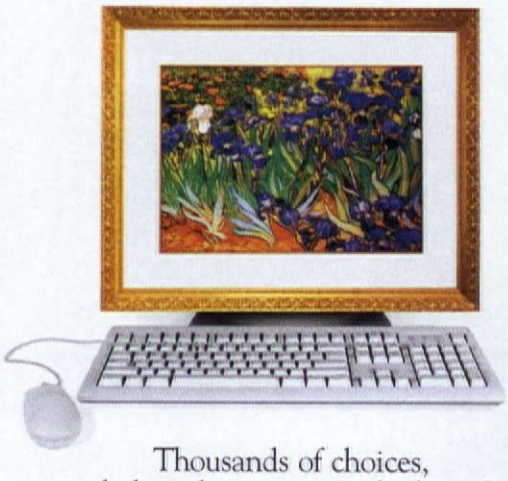
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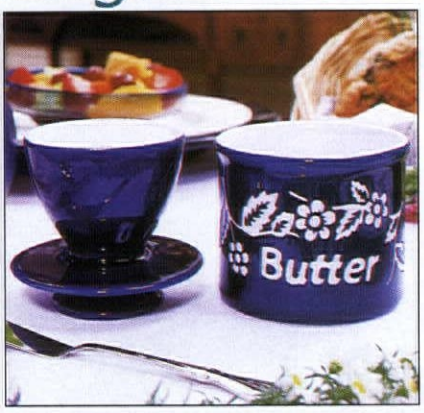
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Lord Clive Chair & Ottoman

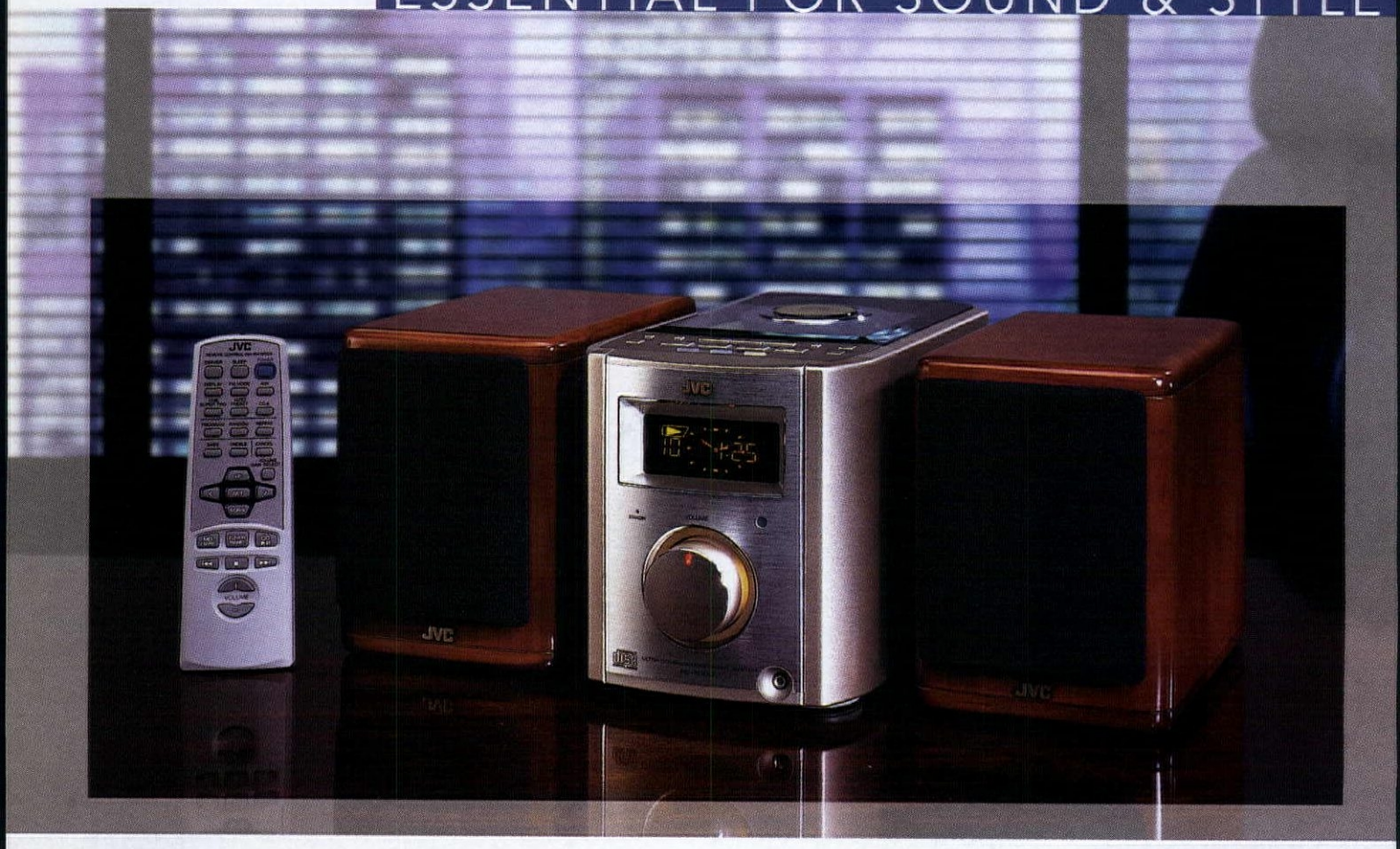
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the standard bottle, which is not necessarily good if you are impatiently waiting for your clarets and cabs to overcome their awkward, snarly adolescence. But big bottles are great for extending the life of a serious wine and for fostering the nuances that can only come from 30 or 40 years of bottle age. A few years ago I tasted the '61 Cheval Blanc in both standard format and magnum, and there was no question that the wine from the magnum was livelier and more complex.

I have to say I like big bottles for strictly superficial reasons—they're party-worthy and look good on the table. From the purely hedonistic point of view, if a magnum is good, a double magnum (four bottles, a.k.a. 3 liters) is better. If you are in refined company, of course, the term "double magnum" may sound a little excessive, evocative as it is of *Dirty Harry*–style weaponry. You may prefer the term "Jéroboam," which sounds more sophisticated, more je ne sais quoi, and less like the prelude to a drunken orgy. The only problem is that the term "Jéroboam" applies to a three-liter bottle of burgundy or champagne. But in Bordeaux, the term is used for the four-and-a-half-liter bottle, which holds the equivalent of six regular bottles. On the other hand, if your party isn't quite large enough for a double magnum (or Jéroboam, as the case may be), you could try a Marie-Jeanne, which is equivalent to three bottles of bordeaux, though it isn't produced for champagne or burgundy. And I believe it's called a Big Gulp in California. Confusing? Hey, nobody said wine was easy. That's why I get paid the big bucks. Because I know where to find the chart above.

California generally follows the Bordeaux line, except in the three largest formats, although these are rarely produced. The humongous Nebuchadnezzar is seldom encountered. Quite aside from the difficulty of making the bottles, there is the question of how to pour from them; also, this format would probably be inappropriate for Jewish weddings, named as it is after the Babylonian king who dragged the Israelites back into captivity. The Balthazar is named after one of the three Magi and is almost as rare as an empty table at the Manhattan restaurant of the same name.

The most useful and available big format, of course, is the magnum. When, at a recent dinner, I put a mag of '94 Pahlmeyer Chardonnay on the table, I was rewarded with many queries and comments even before the guests had tasted it. The next morning I couldn't understand what had happened to the empty bottle until one of my guests sheepishly called to confess that he had staggered off with it because he wanted to turn it into a lamp.

## MEASURING UP How much does a bottle hold?

| CAPACITY | LITERS | BORDEAUX | CHAMPAGNE BURGUNDY |
|---|---|---|---|
| 2 bottles | 1.5 | magnum | magnum |
| 3 bottles | 2.25 | Marie-Jeanne | not made |
| 4 bottles | 3 | double magnum | Jéroboam |
| 6 bottles | 4.5 | Jéroboam | Rehoboam |
| 8 bottles | 6 | Impériale | Methuselah |
| 12 bottles | 9 | not made | Salmanazar |
| 16 bottles | 12 | not made | Balthazar |
| 20 bottles | 15 | not made | Nebuchadnezzar |

## THE OENO FILE

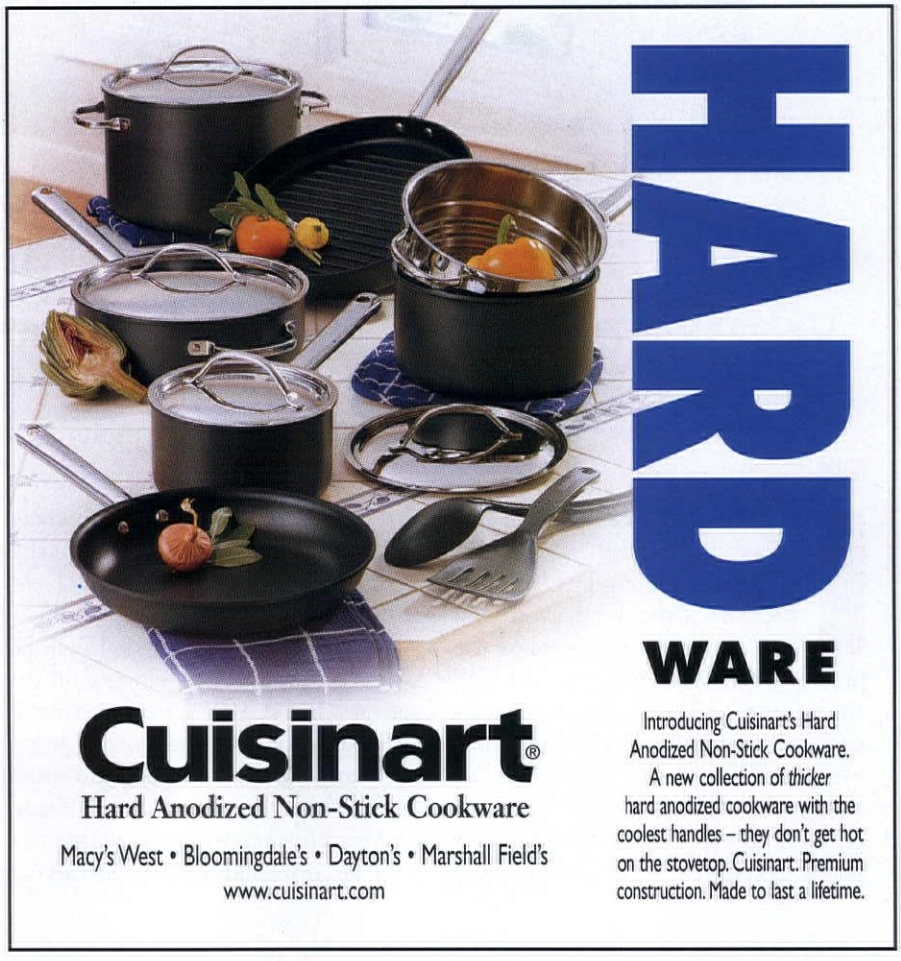
**'95 LE CIGARE VOLANT BONNY DOON** 1.5 liters: Even if I didn't love the name—"flying cigar"—I'd love the wine, an American tribute to Châteauneuf-du-Pape. This vintage is ripe, earthy, and red-meaty, but silky too, like a football player in a peignoir. $62

**'96 DOMAINE DU VIEUX TÉLÉGRAPHE CHÂTEAUNEUF-DU-PAPE** 1.5 liters: This would make a great companion to the Cigare Volant if you're having a really big party; VT is one of the great Châteauneufs, with its own spicy, leathery signature. $60

**'95 LE CORTON BOUCHARD PÈRE ET FILS** 1.5 liters: This is an infant, but it's going to grow up to be either Mulan or Mark McGwire. There's a lot of smoky fruit coiled up in there, and a long lingering finish. Lay this baby down for 10 years. $121

**PERRIER-JOUËT GRAND BRUT NV.** 1.5 liters: A great light, citrusy champagne, the perfect aperitif. $52

**'97 R. H. PHILLIPS CHARDONNAY** 1.5 liters: A well-made, very affordable chard on the slightly sweeter side, à la Kendall-Jackson's Vintner's Reserve. $14





# December 1948

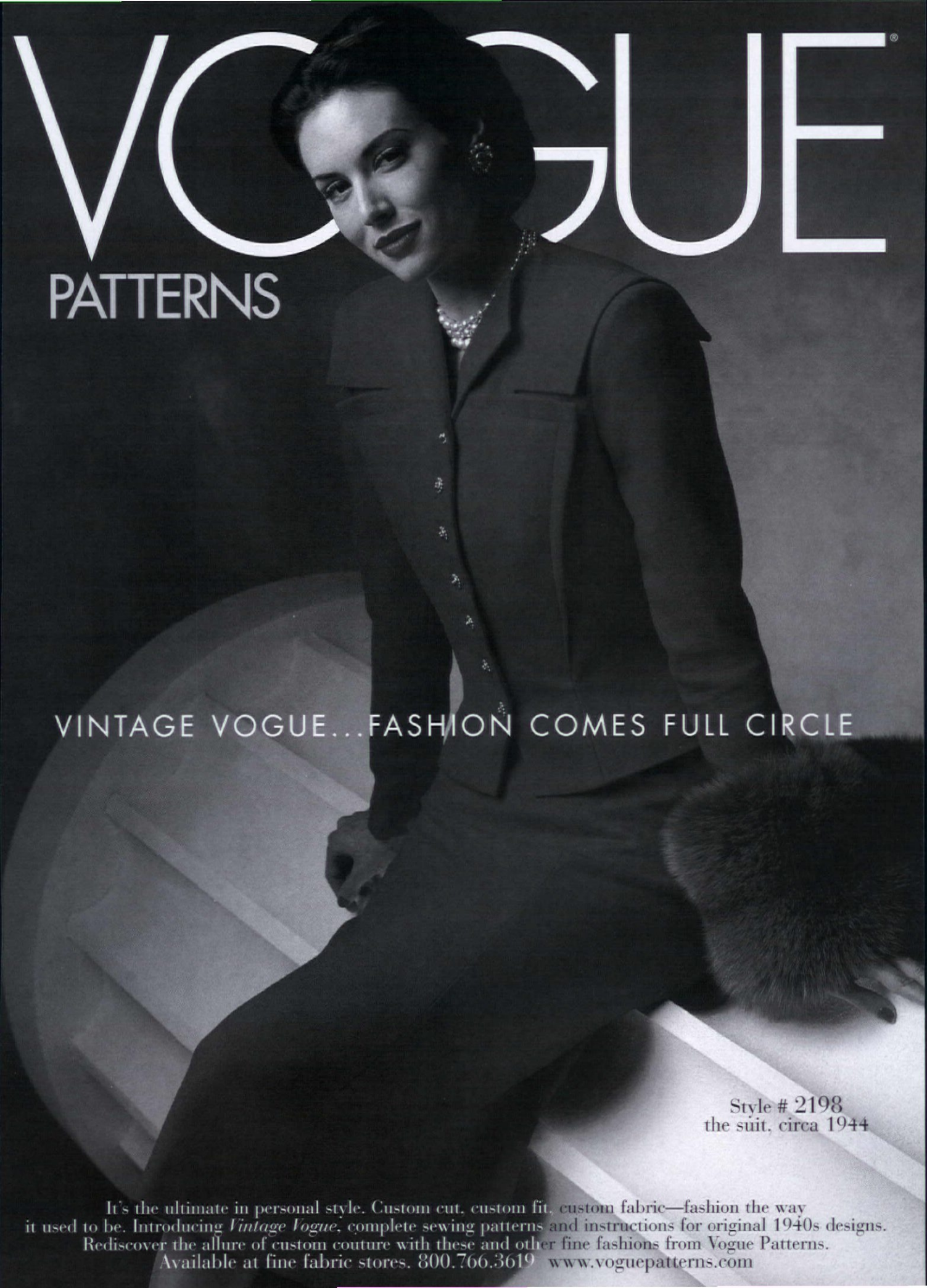
## The sparkle of silver, china, and crystal was a potent aphrodisiac in the giddy years of postwar prosperity

BY VÉRONIQUE VIENNE

In a scene *House & Garden* described as a "Prelude to the Christmas party," a tender display of affection is the perfect foil for a sparkling display of gifts on the holiday table. Published 50 years ago, the picture suggests that amorousness and affluence are a potent combination. The light touch of the husband's fingers on his wife's throat as he bows to kiss her forehead and her pliant response—leaning back, eyes closed, lips apart—betray a gentleness that softens the material glitter of the Wanamaker's silver, Marshall Field china, and Georg Jensen crystal.

Never underestimate the aphrodisiac power of candlelight bouncing off silverware. The rise in the birthrate in the late '40s testifies to the nation's giddy postwar romance with love and prosperity. Freedom was in the air. Young brides were encouraged by magazines to give informal buffet parties—a spread of finger sandwiches and small cakes from elegant purveyors like Louis Sherry and Bellows Gourmet ensured that guests could pick up their plates and circulate freely in a flirtatious mood. No doubt many baby boomers were conceived in the afterglow of such a party. This year, on their fiftieth birthdays, millions of them unknowingly celebrate the anniversary of what was probably a moment of solicitous passion and heady optimism.

PHOTOGRAPH BY JOHN RAWLINGS


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House & Garden



# english grandeur

**first principle** In re-creating the look and feel of an earlier era, decorators feel fortunate to work with spaces similar in scale to those of the past. When historic English country houses serve as inspiration, majestic stairs, ornate paneling, and marble floors offer just the right backdrop for a witty spin on classical English style. An architectural flourish like the hand-plastered aqua cupola, above—inspired by eighteenth-century neoclassical architect Robert Adam—becomes a glorious foil for the bold handblocked wallpaper, whose overscaled pattern makes traditional damask look new again.



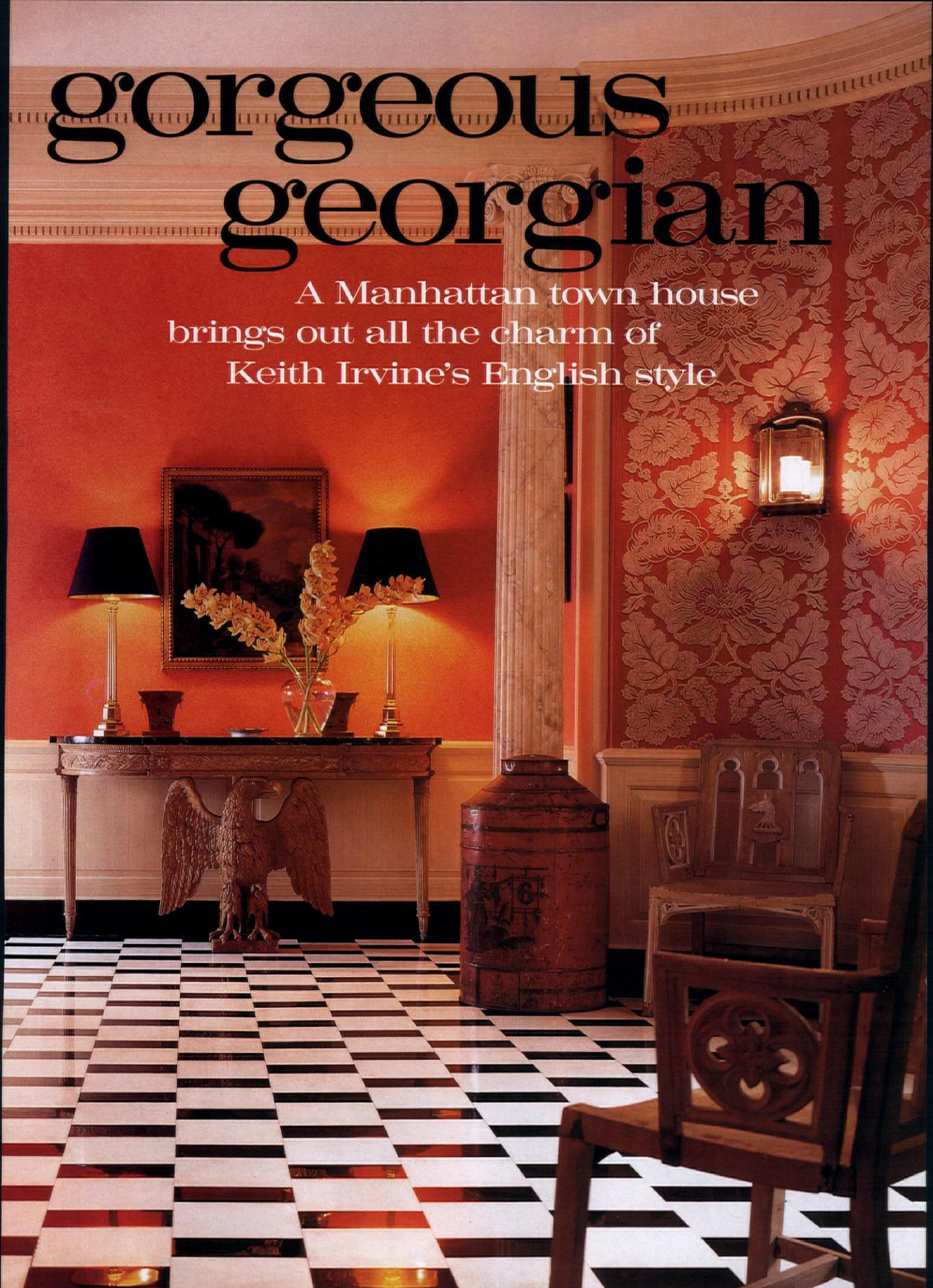
THE SPECTACULAR FOYER is meant to elicit wows! from visitors. It owes much of its drama to Pembroke Damask, a hand-blocked wallpaper from Clarence House. A gilded English Regency console and rare 18th-century Gothic garden chairs add to the unusual mix of furnishings. The round table is draped in Brunschwig & Fils's Harrow Damask. The carpet from Stark was custom-colored.



BY SUZANNE SLESIN PHOTOGRAPHED BY MICHAEL MUNDY

# gorgeous georgian

A Manhattan town house brings out all the charm of Keith Irvine's English style







IT WAS A MATCH made in decorating heaven: An early-twentieth-century, double-fronted mansion on Manhattan's Upper East Side and the talents of Scottish-born Keith Irvine, the celebrated interior decorator, and partner for forty years in Irvine & Fleming, the firm known for its "oh-so-very-very-English" decorating.

The matchmakers were an international couple—he is French, she is American—who chose Irvine over eight of his competitors. The house, which Irvine describes as a "slightly bogus bankers' Georgian," was just his cup of tea—a blank slate for his unstuffy, slightly eccentric British style. Although spacious and intact—only three families had lived in it since 1918—the place, says Irvine, "had no spirit and the architecture was not played up properly."

**AN ARTFUL GROUPING OF CHINA and pictures over the mantel, above, gives the drawing room a soigné look. Antique English botanical plates are arranged around a 1790 Waterford mirror. The George II inlaid marble mantel dates from 1760. GREEN STRIÉ WALLS, in the dining room, opposite page, frame a view of the enfilade of rooms on the second floor. Four screens were made from an 18th-century Dufour wallpaper panel.**





**FOR THE SOFT**, dressy look of the drawing room, Keith Irvine had the walls glazed and striéd in a shadow panel technique. The curtains were made from two colorways of Stroheim & Romann's Mogul, a silk taffeta. The floral Aubusson rug dates from 1805. A George II carved filigree mirror hangs above a Robert Adam settee covered in a French toile from Colefax & Fowler. The Waterford crystal chandelier is from 1780.







**THE PROPORTIONS AND PANELING—glazed in four tones of green—enhance the Georgian look in the dining room. The wing chairs, inspired by Nancy Lancaster's, are covered in Brunschwig & Fils's Le Lac chintz. THE CURTAINS, left, in Cowtan & Tout's Rayure Marie, frame a pair of 1870 wire urns from Treillage that sit on antique Connemara marble pedestals. The Regency bull's-eye mirror is from 1820.**

What more could a decorator wish for?

"This house allowed me to use everything I've learned and absorbed over forty-five years," says Irvine, whose main inspiration comes from what he calls the "high point of the British Empire, when the luxe building and decoration in England was phenomenal." He explains that during the last thirty years of the eighteenth century in England the emphasis was on light, while in the first thirty years of the nineteenth century, English rooms became darker, yet more comfortable. The contrasting styles of this sixty-year period form what Irvine calls the kernel of the decor in this house.

Working with his assistants, Edwin Jackson and Jason Bell, Irvine integrated the richness and creativity characteristic of the turn of the nineteenth century with the lessons he learned from John Fowler and Nancy Lancaster, two British tastemakers of the mid-twentieth century. Fowler, says Irvine, "cleared the



THE PANELED PINE WALLS in the telephone room, above, came from a house in New Hampshire. The antique English William IV settee is covered in two fabrics from Cowan & Tout; the antique English William IV lounge chair is upholstered in Dame du Lac, from Old World Weavers. THE IMPRESSIVE OAK-PANELED library, opposite page, is quintessentially masculine. The Georgian-style plaster ceiling was added to lighten the room. A sofa and pair of Charles of London armchairs, covered in Althea, a printed linen from Lee Jofa, are played against the antique Bokhara rug. The curtains are done in Scalamandré's Wyoming fabric.







**KEITH IRVINE'S FLAIR for creating ultra feminine master bedrooms reaches its peak above. The bed is bedecked in Bouquet & Lattice, a chintz from Cowtan & Tout; its pink interior hangings are Clarence House's Fancy Lining. The tiny settee is covered in Les Enfantes, a Clarence House toile; the club chair is in Verrières, a Brunschwig & Fils linen. THE DIRECTOIRE-STYLE RUG, from Stark Carpet, opposite page, was custom-colored to coordinate with the glazed walls. Sources, see back of book.**

gloomy things out of houses," and Lancaster, "who was a grande dame all her life, made her own houses so charming and comfortable that her rich American friends wanted the same thing."

Irvine's color combinations are startling; patterns are mixed with seeming insouciance; pictures and bibelots are deftly arranged. The idea is to astonish without looking pretentious. The majestic foyer, with its sharply patterned black-and-white marble floor and wide dramatic stair, sets the tone. "All entrances should be a bit overdramatic and architectural," Irvine says. The overscaled hand-blocked English wallpaper is both surprising and welcoming—just the effect Irvine intended. "I want people to go through the front door and say, 'Wow!' "

Guests will also be amazed by the enfilade of rooms on the second floor—the stately dining room, with its green-glazed walls and chintz-covered wing chairs, the dreamy watercolor-hued sitting room. The glazed walls and the sophisticated mix of English and French pieces, the beautiful Aubusson carpet, and silk and tasseled curtains emphasize the charmingly anachronistic approach. "It's a drawing room where people dressed



up in their fancy flocks withdraw to after dinner," says Irvine.

In an era of mostly unisex rooms, Irvine does not shy away from creating distinctly feminine or masculine ones. "I've always felt that women are most comfortable in rooms created especially for men," he says, of the enormous oak-paneled library. Handsome green-striped curtains, a patterned Bokhara rug, and seating in colorful printed linen add to the comfort and warmth.

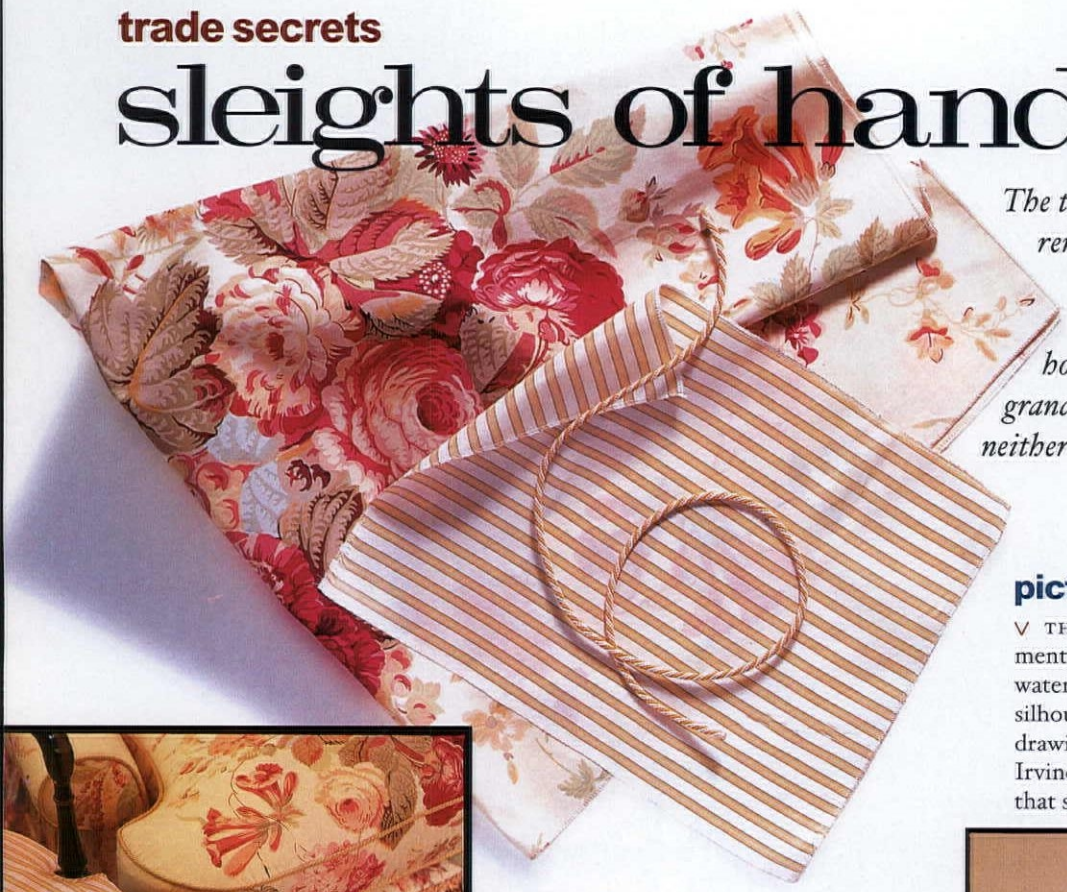
But the apotheosis of gender-specific decorating appears in the pink and pale blue master bedroom, where Irvine has installed an elaborately draped canopy bed. "A master bedroom, the woman's nerve center of the house, should always be feminine," he says. Following Fowler's advice that "women look their best in a cloud of pink," Irvine used yards of pink chintz around the bed. "Men love feminine bedrooms because they are the extension of what they find attractive about their wives," he says. But he knows that women hesitate to emphasize the feminine for fear their husbands will be unhappy. The decorator smiles. "My experience shows that usually you can persuade a husband faster than a wife."

trade secrets

# sleights of hand

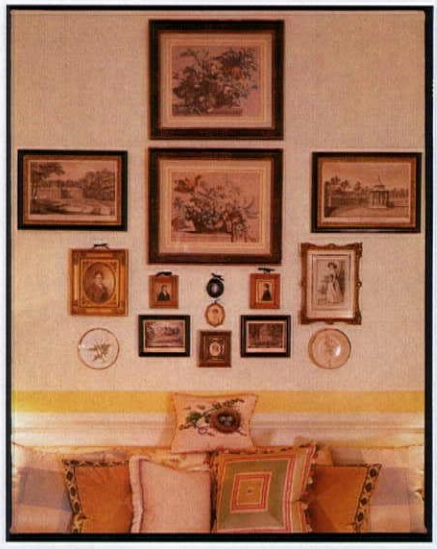
*The talents of Keith Irvine, a renowned decorator with the soul of an English eccentric, shape a Manhattan town house where Georgian grandeur and sophistication are neither formal nor pretentious.*

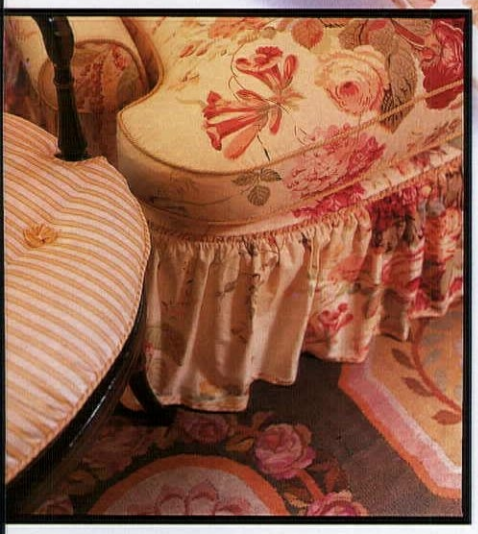
—JOYCE BAUTISTA



## picture perfect

V THE WELL-BALANCED arrangement of old English and French watercolors, prints, drawings, and silhouettes above the sofa in the drawing room is an example of what Irvine calls "a personal Keith mix that speaks of all my talents."





## mellow yellow

< THE BOLD FLORAL CHINTZ Le Rosier from Cowtan & Tout, with custom yellow trim from Passementerie; the delicate gold-and-white cotton Cannes Stripe from Christopher Norman; and an early-19th-century Aubusson carpet are deftly combined in the yellow-walled drawing room on the second floor. The fabrics contribute to the overall feeling of femininity and daintiness, in a gracious room where guests gather after dinner.





## green thumb

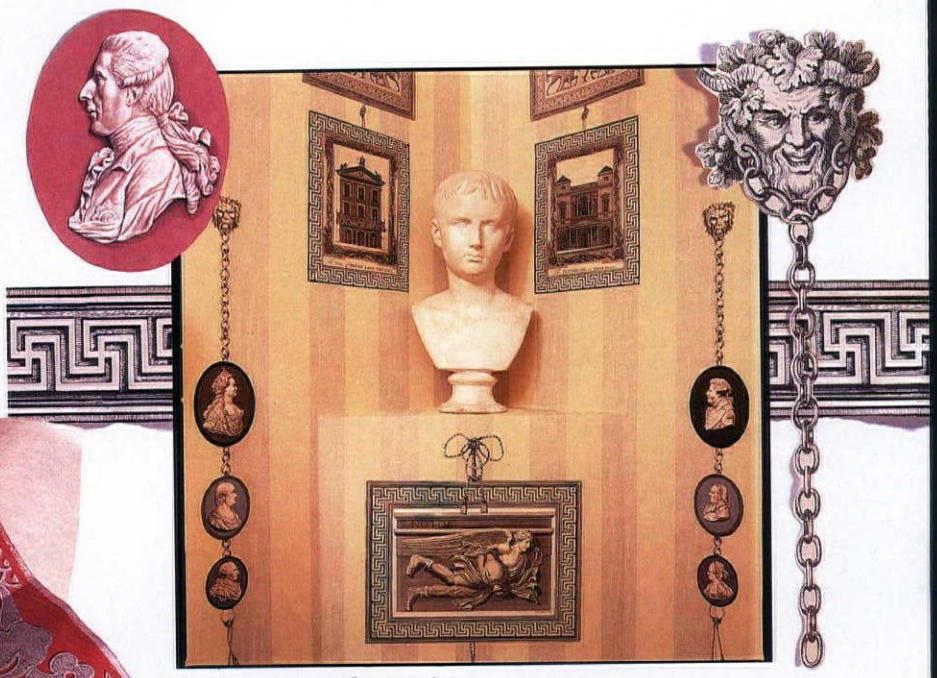
< THERE ARE four shades of green in the striés on the walls of the dining room. They were created by using one color with different degrees of brush pressure. The same effect was achieved on the moldings by brushing a piece of muslin across the wet surfaces. To get the precise line of red trim, Irvine came up with an efficient application: red plastic Letraline tape from an art supply store.



## grand entry

^ ALTHOUGH the dramatic walls in the foyer, stairwell, and the upstairs landing look stenciled, they are actually covered in Pembroke Damask, a hand-blocked wallpaper from Clarence House that was inspired by a 17th-century wallpaper at Pembroke House in England.





## cut and paste

^ TO RE-CREATE THE EFFECT of the print rooms popular in the 18th century, Chippy Irvine, the interior decorator's wife, glued engravings of classical subjects to the walls in the powder room, combining reproductions of original prints with painstakingly cut borders, cords, tassels, chain links, ribbons, bows, and garlands. She daubed moistened tea bags on the surface to give the prints an antiqued look.



## saucy mix

v THE MIX of patterns in the dining room is striking: Brunschwig & Fils's Le Lac chintz on the wing chairs; Colefax & Fowler's Lonford on the Sheraton chairs; and a Rock Savage carpet from Stark Carpet.



## think pink

^ THE MASTER BEDROOM'S elaborate canopy bed, with swooping pleats of Fancy Lining by Clarence House, a floral valance of Cowtan & Tout's Bouquet & Roses, and Stroheim & Romann's solid pink trim, is Irvine's homage to John Fowler, the founder of the English design house of Colefax & Fowler. Fowler believed in emphatically feminine master bedrooms, and according to Irvine, usually lined the inside of the hangings around a canopy bed with pink fabric. Sources, see back of book.



INTERIOR DETAILS: LAURIE LAMBRECHT; STILL LIFE: SERGIO PURTELL



CAROLYNE ROEHM draws on her collection of linen and china for a fireside Connecticut Christmas. The vermeil plates were custom-made by Asprey; the flatware, by James Robinson, Inc., was also made to order. The linen tablecloth is from Porthault. Box-wood cuttings are arrayed in 19th-century porcelain de Paris baskets. The wine goblets are from the Valentino Home Collection. All flowers and greenery by Tommy Anderson.



# Sublime Settings

AT HOLIDAY TIME, the table is center stage. When we asked some favorite designers to set a seasonal scene, they treated us to a bouquet of banquets—some nostalgic, others pure fantasy. Carolyne Roehm warms us with tradition; Madison Cox builds a modern snow queen's palace. David Stark and Avi Adler paint an intimate space in full, floral strokes; and Arcadia comes alive in Nymphenburg porcelain. Let the party begin!



**FRAMED BY QUINCE BLOSSOMS**, another holiday table at Roehm's 1765 house is centered around a sterling silver soup tureen from Wyler's, NYC., George III sterling candlesticks, and 19th-century Steuben wineglasses from Alicia Abrams Antiques. A Regency library table and the books it holds are from Partridge's, London. **A CLOSER LOOK**, opposite page, shows how Roehm has ecumenically paired cranberry glass dinner plates from Pottery Barn with Victorian sterling service plates and flatware from Garrard, London. The salver is from James Robinson; the damask napkins are by Anichini, NYC. Antique silk Mokuba ribbons from Paris wrap the tiny gifts. Photographed by Sylvia Bequet. Produced by Senga Mortimer.



*"I remembered Dr. Zhivago and wanted to evoke those scenes where everything looked as though it were covered in confectioners' sugar"*—MADISON COX, LANDSCAPE DESIGNER



**BEST KNOWN** for extraordinary garden designs, Madison Cox steps indoors to create eclectic Arctic glamor. Saarinen Tulip chairs—one topped with silvery mesh pillows from Troy, NYC, another with a fur throw by Yves St. Laurent—surround a table dressed in an antique silk coverlet from Cora Ginsburg. On the table, rock-crystal and amethyst votives by Tony Duquette orbit a late-19th-century American silver bowl from Sotheby's. "The juxtapositions give it soul," says Cox. The carafe and purple tumblers are by Baccarat; Ultimat Thule cordial glasses are from Moss, NYC. The sterling plate and silver and mother-of-pearl utensils are by James Robinson Inc. The Supreme Flokati rug is from Einstein Moomjy. This scene was created in an ice factory in NYC; we suggest finding a warmer place to be cool. Photographed by Francine Fleischer. Produced by Carolina Irving.









PORCELAIN FIGURINES from the Nymphenburg pottery of Munich hold a Lilliputian party on the table of Elizabeth Walbröl, whose husband, Werner, heads the German-American Chamber of Commerce. "You really do feel they're dancing," says Walbröl. "It's magical." SHOWN IN DETAIL, far left, these handmade reproductions are part of Nymphenburg's Italian Comedy series, based on a late-18th-century design. They frolic among topiary pieces from the pottery's Rococo Garden collection, created in 1754, and tableware produced from original historical molds. A 19th-century Japanese screen serves as backdrop. The tablecloth and napkins are from E. Braun & Co.; the wineglasses are from William Yeoward Crystal. Sources, see back of book. Photographed by Gaby Zimmermann. Styled by Carolina Irving.



*"We sought the private moment within the grandeur. Imagine a king or duke proposing in this setting"* —DAVID STARK, DESIGNER



**NEW YORK DESIGNERS** Avi Adler and David Stark are used to arranging gala events for hundreds, but here they envisioned a royal soirée for two—an intimate room bursting with a king's ransom in roses. The crystal and gilt bronze centerpiece, designed by Jean Boggio, was inspired by the Debussy ballet "*L'après-midi d'un faune*." It is part of a limited edition available through Baccarat. The tablecloth in Scalamandré silk taffeta was made to order by D&F Workroom. Red champagne flutes and wineglasses are by Saint Louis; the Louis XVI chairs are from Newel Art Galleries. The soup bowls, saucers, and compote dish are from Bernardaud's Bois de Rose collection. Photographed by Jay Zukerkorn. Produced by Brooke Stoddard.



# it's not academic

## Garden designer Sharon Adams and Professor Henry Louis Gates breathe new life into their Cambridge, Massachusetts, house



THE FOOTING is a little uneven in places, due to tree roots and reworked utility lines, but the beloved red-brick sidewalks of Cambridge still weave together the experiences of those who attend Harvard University and live beyond its walls. Students follow these red bricks out of Harvard Yard, along tree-lined streets of Colonial and Victorian houses, to shops in nearby Harvard Square. Among the streets most enlivened by the bustle of passersby are Francis Avenue and Irving Street, the principle thruways of a venerable neighborhood. Proximity to the university turned the neighborhood into an academic stronghold in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Students of that era walked by the large, comfortable homes of William James and Josiah Royce. Since those days, little has changed except for the dwellers. Today one passes John Kenneth Galbraith's house, and Julia Child's, the residences of at least three deans, and most recently, on Francis Avenue, the newly renovated home of Professor Henry Louis Gates, Jr., chairman of Harvard's Afro-American Studies Department, W.E.B. Du Bois Professor of the Humanities, and a prolific author and his wife, garden designer Sharon Adams.

Such a distinguished litany of names belies the neighborhood's true virtue, indeed, the particular reason for Gates's arrival. Henry Louis, or Skip as he is widely known, found himself and two daughters (Maggie, 18,

WRITTEN BY LISA GERMANY PHOTOGRAPHED BY MICHEL ARNAUD
PRODUCED BY JUDYTH VAN AMRINGE AND CAROLINE YOUNG




**FROM THE FRONT** the Gates/Adams house may look like its neighbors, but the back, opposite page, and the interior add light and drama to Yankee style. **IN THE LIVING ROOM**, this page, a charcoal by Elizabeth Catlett hangs over a miscellany of pieces on the mantel: from left, a bronze Yoruba figure; a contemporary American sculpture by Cynthia Aldrich; an Ibo piece; Makonde art in ebony from Tanzania; a rare bronze bell from Benin; and an Ibo mask. The contemporary rug is Iranian. The sofas are from Crate & Barrel.



and Liza, 16) at this prestigious address because Adams yearned not for the mystique of Francis Avenue but for its spirit of home and family life within an urban university environment.

"It's SHARON'S house," says Gates, who is still a little amazed by how well the renovation turned out. Once the home of noted psychologist and Herman Melville biographer Henry A. Murray, the house had fallen into disrepair. "It was a boring stucco house," Gates recalls. Then, revealing why he signed the papers in spite of his doubts, he adds, "I'm fortunate to live with a woman who is a brilliant designer, able to encode all the symbols of our lives into our home."

"Skip didn't dare to believe he would love it as much as he does," Adams says. But having renovated several homes during the couple's twenty-six-year marriage, it was easy for her to spot the house's good bones: its interior arches; the elegant doors on either side of the monumental fireplace; and, especially, the generous circulation space between the principal public rooms of the first floor.

Unfazed by its drab exterior and garishly painted interior, Adams felt the house welcomed her warmly. She was concerned, however, when her family continued to have mixed feelings, and so she decided to call their friend, architect and





**The public rooms mix African-American and African pieces with more traditional furnishings. IN THE LIVING ROOM, opposite page, the 19th-century American mirror is said to have come from the U. S. House of Representatives. The wooden hornbill is a sacred Senufo piece. IN THE LITTLE ROOM, above, the Fortuny lamp from Chimera, Boston, hangs above an antique Steinway. The poster of Josephine Baker is from the 1920s. The Senufo mask is from the Ivory Coast. A Makonde tree of life stands at the entrance to the room. TWO PAINTINGS FROM the 1980s by Jonathan Green, left, hang above a contemporary Moroccan console in the living room. A Yorbua Eshu figure, a bowl by David Leech from 1987, and a Yoruba ceremonial staff are among the objects on the console.**



"I'm fortunate **to live with** a woman who is a brilliant designer, able to encode all the **symbols** of our lives into our home"—HENRY LOUIS GATES, JR.



urban planner Moshe Safdie, for advice. Safdie's arrival on a dreary winter's day marked the turning point in the renovation. As a result of their two-hour stroll and subsequent dinner meetings, Adams and Gates credit Safdie with the conceptual design. He modestly concedes that he pointed the way to making the house come alive. But he also feels fortunate that he put them in touch with architect Chris Chan, who had worked for him, and Chan's wife and partner, Annie Mock.

THE IMMEDIATE concern was to open up the kitchen. The new plan eliminated a mudroom, pushed the small, dark kitchen ten feet outward into the garden, and raised the ceiling to double height. Elsewhere, structural changes were also complex. "Basically, we had to carve out spaces to give them the rooms they needed," Chan remembers. Because Liza, the couple's youngest daughter, requested a basement room, the largest of three rooms there was outfitted with a bathroom and closets.

The second floor seemed the logical place for Gates's office, even though creating it necessitated knocking out the walls of two rooms and a corridor, and building in abundant bookshelf space. Daughter Maggie took the master bedroom because Adams wanted to remodel an existing apartment in the attic. A kitchen there became the couple's light-suffused master bath, and a dark living room became their bedroom once it was opened to the outside by a dormer. Also in their upstairs garret, a delightful room with cubbyholes and a fireplace became Adams's studio, bringing together her work as a painter and garden designer.

When the house's wooden moldings were stripped and refinished, and the walls were painted in warm off-whites, yellows, and grays, what Adams calls the integrity of the house began to emerge.

**THE GENEROUS HALLWAY allows the family to integrate folk art and fine art in a relaxed manner. The rooster and large sculpture are Senufo tribal pieces. The dog on the wall is by Ken Sedberry, a North Carolina artist. The charcoal drawing is by Beauford Delaney, as is the abstract painting. The fabric on the 19th-century English chairs is by Mulberry.**

Gates's fears that the family's collection of African art would not fit were allayed as the house became an elegant, very personal exhibition space.

Adams's guiding sensibility is everywhere in the house, but it was Gates who chose the exterior color, perhaps the single most difficult decision faced by the design team of Adams, Safdie, Chan, and Mock. Gates's preference for a warm Mediterranean hue that would remind him of six weeks spent in Bellagio, Italy, won out over a field of more conservative colors. The couple smiles about the commentary the home's cantaloupe color initially inspired, and the literary historian in Gates admits, "I felt that I was the character in Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man* who lived in a hole with 1,369 light bulbs." Now all people can say is how warm the house feels on cold winter days and how beautifully the light plays across it.

When Adams found the Murray house and persevered in renovating it, she awakened what had been a forgotten fantasy of her husband's, dating back to a college visit, just two doors down, to the home of John Kenneth Galbraith. "I came home from Cambridge, England, where I had met Jamie [Galbraith], and he invited me to meet his father," Gates recalls now. "I stood outside that house and thought, 'God, if I could ever live on this street and teach at Harvard, I'd be in heaven.' I never dreamed then I would end up at Harvard, never dreamed I would live on Francis Avenue."

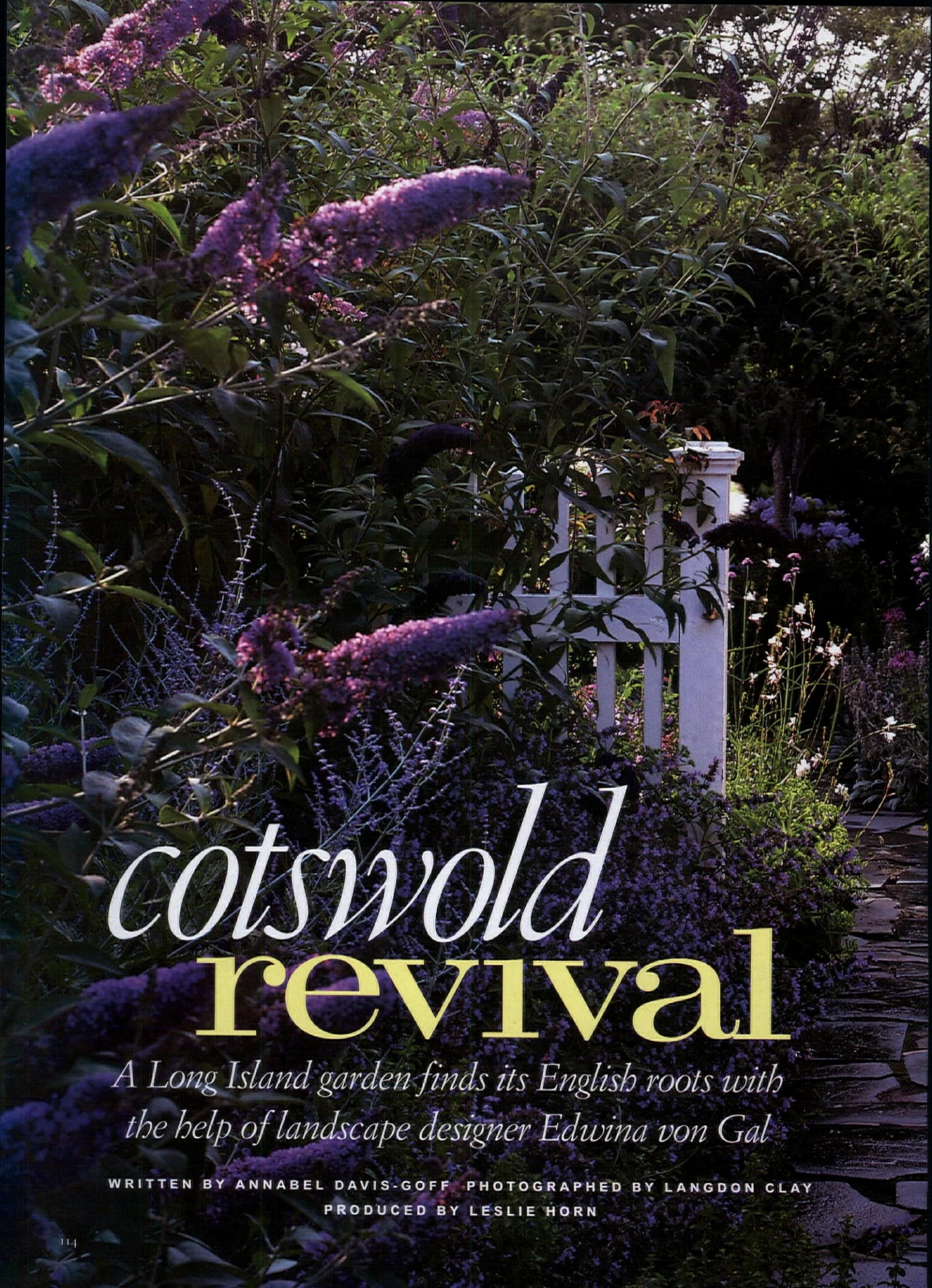
**LISA GERMANY** *is the author of the biography* Harwell Hamilton Harris.






**ONE OF THE MOST DRAMATIC changes in the house was the expansion of the kitchen, above, into an airy gathering place for the family. The painting above the custom-made cherry cabinet with soapstone countertops is by Sam Gilliam. The chairs are from Domain. IN THE HALLWAY, left, the 19th-century painting is of Ruth Ann Daly Adams. The contemporary metal pot is from Bida, Nigeria. THE DINING TABLE, opposite page, a reproduction of a three-pedestal table, is English. The Italian chandelier is contemporary. The Art Deco glasses are from Czechoslovakia. The 150-year-old china cabinet was made in Virginia; the 18th-century grandfather clock is also American. A poster of Josephine Baker hangs over a MacKenzie-Childs settee.**


JOSEPHINE
12 FEVRIER



# cotswold revival

*A Long Island garden finds its English roots with the help of landscape designer Edwina von Gal*

WRITTEN BY ANNABEL DAVIS-GOFF PHOTOGRAPHED BY LANGDON CLAY
PRODUCED BY LESLIE HORN



ENGLISH COTTAGE GARDENS such as those in the Cotswolds have left their mark on the picturesque entrance to the pool garden. Varieties of buddleia surround the gate. The path leads past the pool to the cutting garden.



THE OWNER DESCRIBES the little Cotswold cottage on the property as a "stage set." Cottage garden flowers—hollyhocks, sedum, and *Cleome*—surround it. THE VIEW FROM its bench, opposite page, is of the south side of the great lawn, with its border of spirea. The beehive, is one of the cottage's atmospheric props.





HIDDEN FROM THE road by a large Cotswold manor house and sheltered from the Atlantic winds by tall privet hedges, a formal English garden stands on three acres of eastern Long Island. The garden is the result of a collaboration of two women: One is the owner, a passionate amateur gardener, and the other is Edwina von Gal, the landscape designer.

The owner has a well-trained eye—she has a background in art history and is an accomplished photographer—but her gardening experience prior to the purchase of the property in 1991 was limited. After several false starts, she felt a need to educate herself.

First, she visited local gardens and spent hours looking at books and magazines. Then she began to travel. Not surprisingly, she started with Hidcote Manor, the famous Cotswold garden of Major Lawrence Johnston. The result of her visit to Hidcote is visible in the cottage garden, in front of a stage-set Cotswold guesthouse.

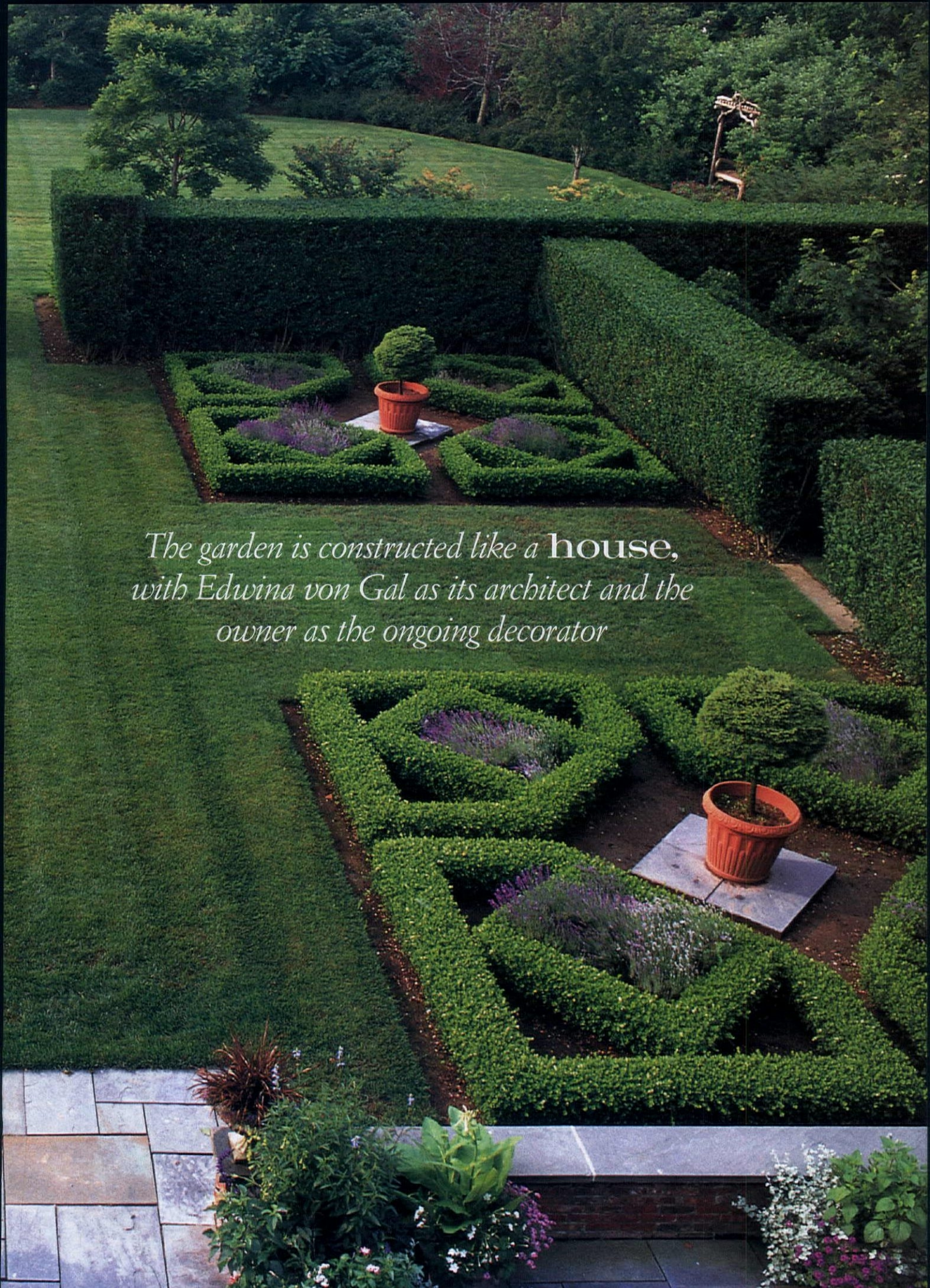
Next, she spent some days at Vita Sackville-West's Sissinghurst, in Kent. Soon she began to understand the mixture of firm principles and poetic ideas that makes Sissinghurst one of the most beautiful gardens in England. As she walked through it, she realized how the design drew her on, and from this experience she gained an appreciation of proportions and vistas.

The owner next visited Westwell, Anthea Gibson's garden in Burford, Oxfordshire, where she was delighted by its magnificent topiaries. She saw that every vista drew her eye to a sundial, an urn, a pergola, or even a colorful shrub. Westwell's contrast between severe formality and soft informality was particularly pleasing to her.

Returning to the United States inspired and excited by the ideas of Sackville-West and Gibson, but still not quite able to



THE TERRA-COTTA URN in the distance draws the eye past the terrace and the parterres, across the great lawn, and through the rose garden to the hawthorn allée.



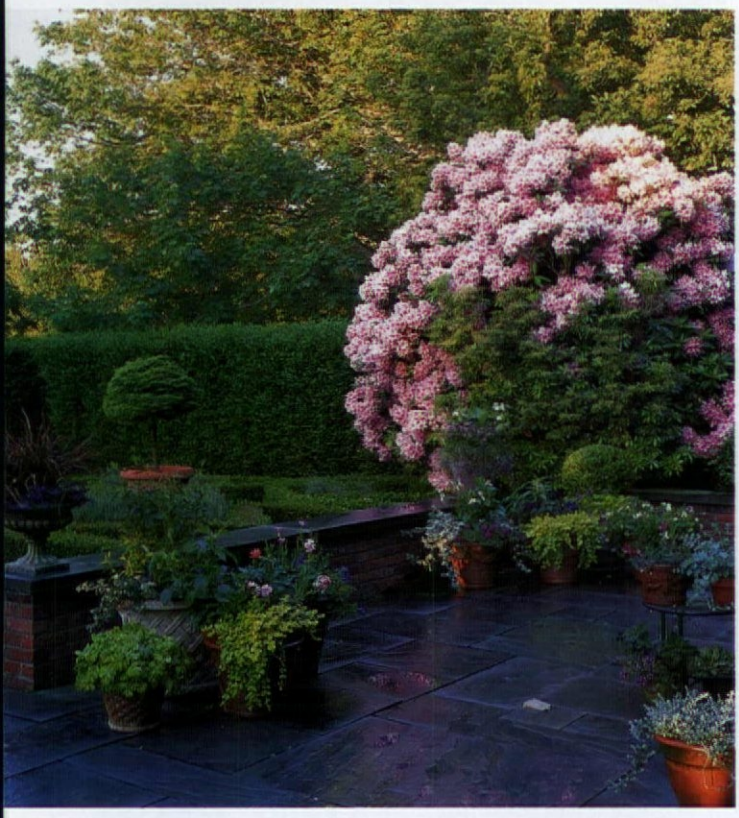
*The garden is constructed like a* **house,**
*with Edwina von Gal as its architect and the*
*owner as the ongoing decorator*







SPIREA AND A SELECTION of sedum, top left, bloom in the euphorbia garden. THE WALLS ENCLOSING the pear allée, top right, are double-sided—privet lined with ilex—giving them two distinct textures. A TERRA-COTTA URN, left, divides the hawthorn allée and is the focal point of the vista from the terrace. The hawthorns are underplanted with iris and allium. THE ENCLOSED GARDEN at one end of the great lawn, above, is lined with buddleia, phlox, gooseneck loosestrife, sedum, and lamb's ears.



THE WHITE SHRUB ROSE 'Seafoam' was trained to climb on either side of the doors to the bluestone terrace. THE HOT PINK RHODODENDRON, left, was part of a garden original to the property. The new owner built the terrace and brick walls around it.

articulate her needs, she was introduced to Edwina von Gal. Von Gal had no difficulty finding the words, and the result is a happy and beautiful collaboration.

The garden von Gal and the owner built is constructed like a house, with the designer as its architect and the owner its ongoing decorator. It consists of a series of 15 or more rooms with tall clipped walls, mostly of privet. Each room opens into another, and the visitor is drawn on not only by an allée, path, or gate but also by a distant object—an urn, a fountain, a sundial.

The terrace is essentially an extension of the house. It draws you out through the French doors of the living room. A distant urn then leads you farther into the garden, along the main axis, from which your eye is drawn to one of the other gardens. The pear allée—a summer dining room—is also an extension of the house. The family room overlooks the Diana garden, where a large Deco statue of the goddess stands in an unpretentious setting of holly and privet.

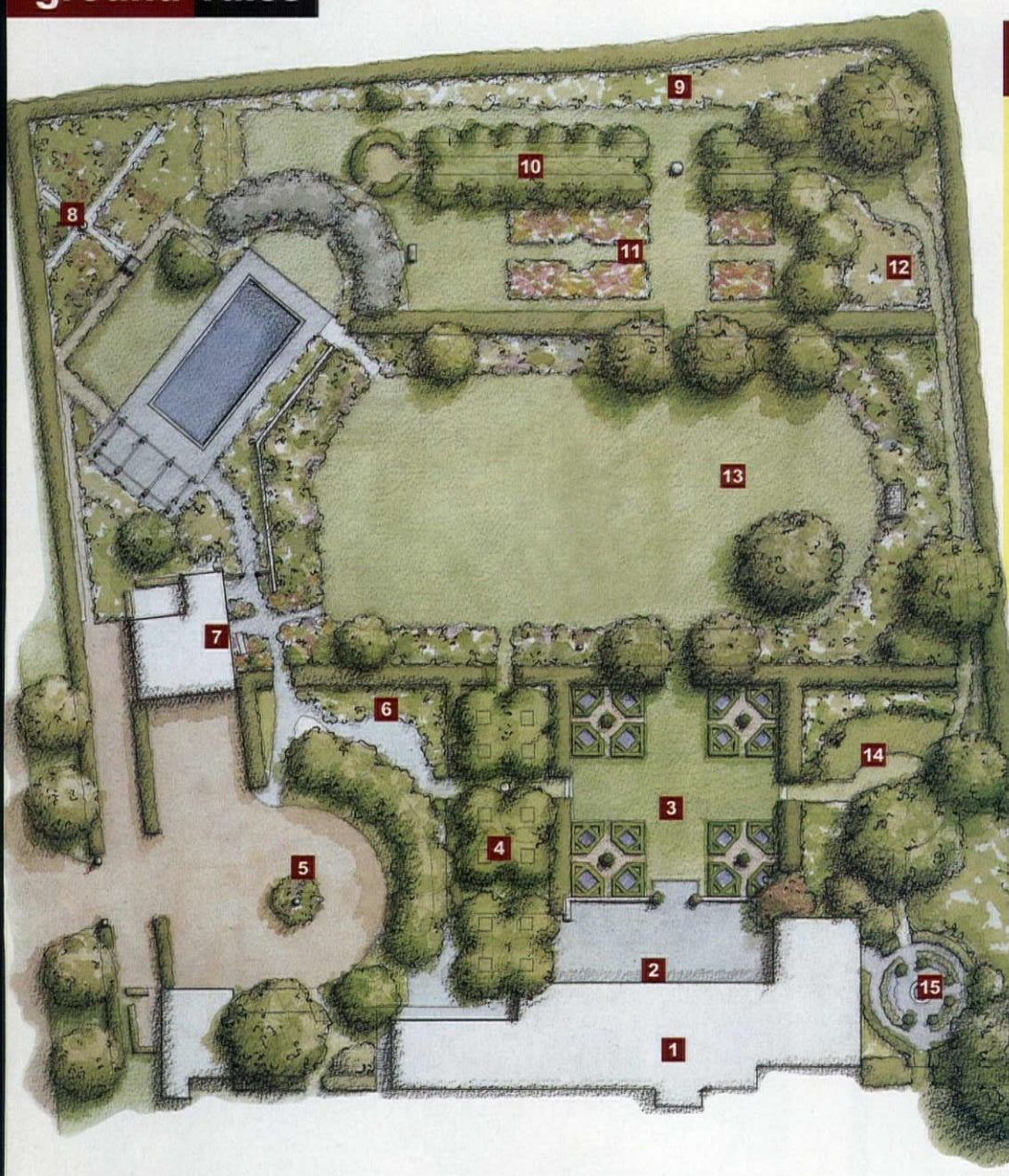
Beyond the terrace and pear garden lies the largest "room" in the house—the great lawn, edged with deep, lush borders. At one end of the lawn stands the Cotswold cottage. A little farther from the house lie the cutting garden, the pool garden, the cottage garden, the euphorbia garden, the shade garden, the hawthorn allée, and the rose garden.

The classic English formal garden owes a great deal to the ideas brought back from Italy by generations of Grand Tourists and then softened by the English climate. In the same way, Long Island's climate and the educated taste of these two women have made this formal garden into something a little crisper, hardier, and more resilient than its English predecessors.

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**ANNABEL DAVIS-GOFF**'s *most recent novel is* The Dower House *(St. Martin's Press).*






**CATBIRD'S- EYE VIEW**
**2 ACRES**

1 House
2 Terrace
3 Parterre Garden
4 Pear Allée
5 Courtyard with Sundial
6 Euphorbia Garden
7 Cotswold Cottage and Garden
8 Cutting Garden
9 Hydrangea Garden
10 Hawthorn Allée
11 Rose Garden
12 Shade Garden
13 Great Lawn
14 Diana Garden
15 Fountain Garden

# learning from the masters

IT HAS BEEN SAID that originality is the art of concealing your sources. But why the subterfuge? In the gardening world, borrowing ideas (cross-pollination, as it were) has been going on from ancient times. Ever since the founding of the republic, many American gardeners have been keen on following the lead of the English. And why not? In the case of this Long Island garden, the borrowings have been taken from England's finest designs.

## Framing the view

The French mastered it first, but the English quickly caught on. Following Le Nôtre who unveiled his masterpiece at Vaux-le-Vicomte, garden designers have used long axial features such as allées, tunnels, walks, and lined hedges to emphasize or imply vast space. Here, designer Edwina von Gal used a series of hedges to function as walls for the rooms they delineate, as well as to be perspective markers along the path of the viewer. As with any view, there must be something to look at—an object at the end to capture the eye. In this case, a Grecian urn is used as a focal point for both the terminus of the view across the lawn, (13), and as a midpoint in the pear allée (4), seen on page 123. As at the English garden Hidcote, the creation of Major Lawrence Johnston (an American), who began designing it at the turn of the century, the implied distance of these long views makes the garden seem much larger than it actually is.

Sometimes, framing the view also functions as a diversionary tactic for the garden designer—a way of manipulating visitors into noticing the garden's desirable features, while distracting them from its problem areas.

## A system of enclosures

Historically, the essence of a garden was enclosure. The concept of excluding the outside world from a walled garden stems from ancient Middle Eastern ideas of paradise. In planning this garden, von Gal found that

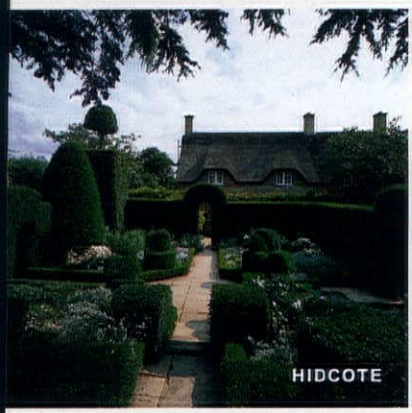
ILLUSTRATION BY PERRY GUILLOT; PHOTOGRAPHS, CLOCKWISE: 1, ANDREW LAWSON; 2, 3 LANGDON CLAY; 4 JOHN MILLER; 5 FRITZ VON DER SCHULENBURG


BARNSLEY HOUSE

**INFLUENCES AND INSPIRATIONS** **At Barnsley House, Rosemary Verey's illustrious Gloucestershire garden, right, an underplanting of *Allium aflatunense* forms a whimsical promenade beneath the laburnum tunnel, one of the garden's most famous features.** **THE IDEA FINDS** **new expression in the Long Island garden, below right, where blue iris under an allée of hawthorn trees bloom concurrently with the allium.**

paradise required disciplined geometry. "You can't just be wowed by the beauty of plants," she explains. "You need to offer a more disciplined view."

Creating enclosures within enclosures is another trick that affects perception of space. The ruse is seen at its best in gardens like Hidcote. Visitors to Hidcote, such as the owner of the Long Island garden, discover, almost without realizing it, that subdividing a garden space into smaller areas can actually make it seem larger. One way of accomplishing this feat is to divide the overall space into a series of rooms and then to subdivide those rooms into intricate patterns, as seen in the parterres (3) on page 120. There, the small clipped box edgings echo the larger privet hedges that surround them. The intricacy of the overall design must be guarded from busyness by the use of tall screening hedges that prevent the variety and number of garden features from being immediately apparent.


HIDCOTE

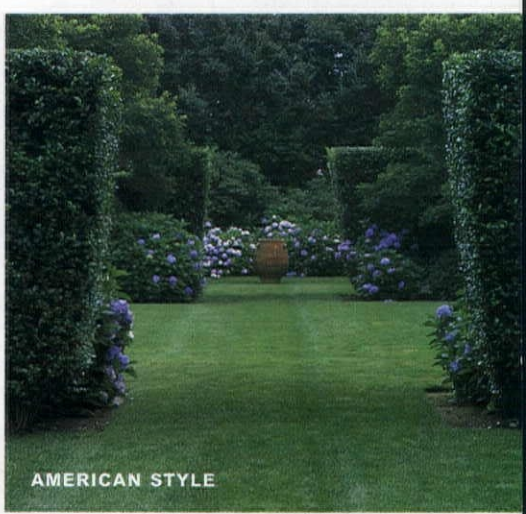

AMERICAN STYLE

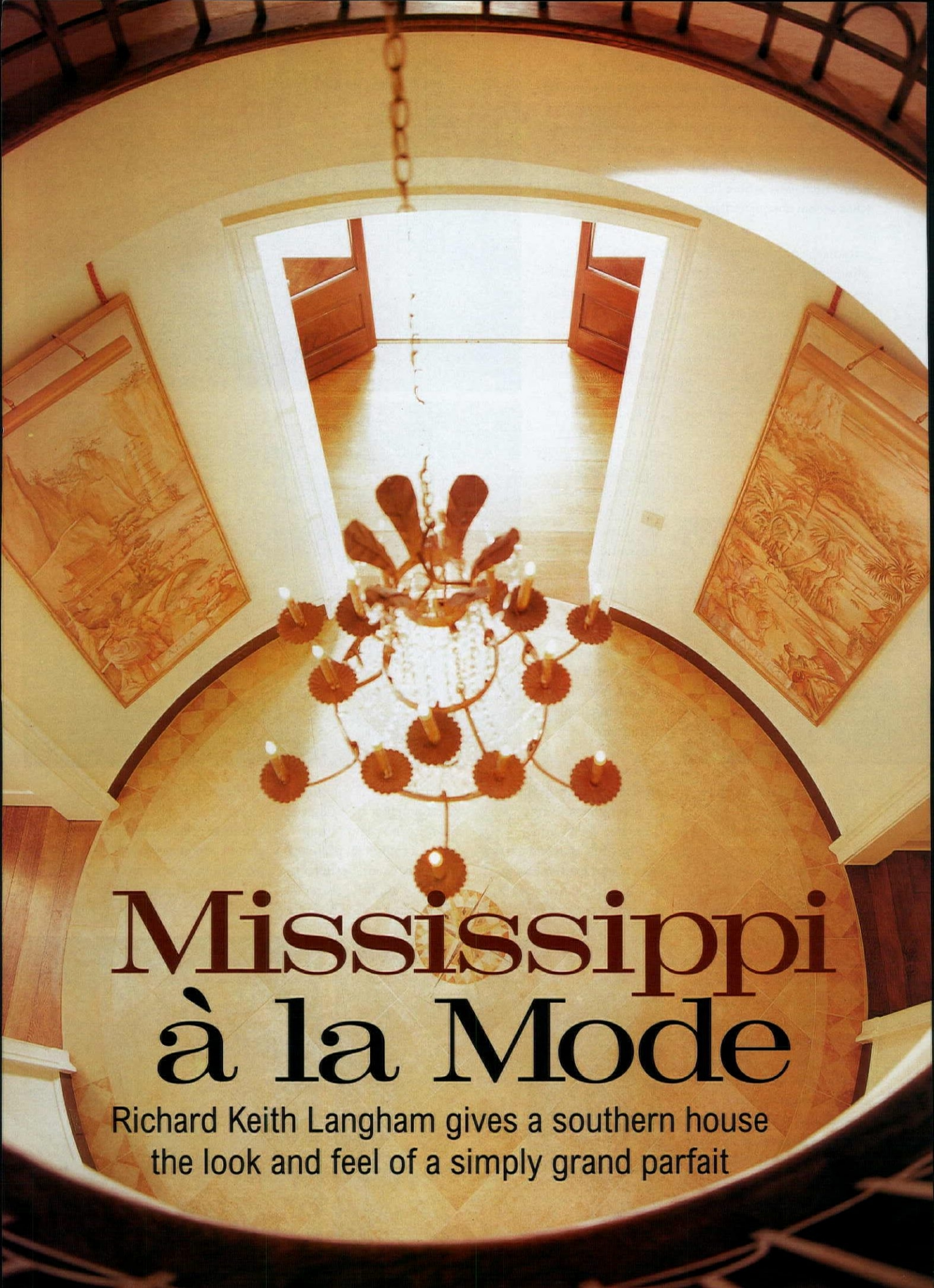
## Soften the structure with plants

At Sissinghurst, Vita Sackville-West's aim was "profusion, even extravagance and exuberance, within the confines of the utmost linear severity." Inspiring words for our garden maker on Long Island, who plants fountains of buddleia, phlox, loosestrife, and verbena to blur (but slightly) the edges of her structure. The color scheme is also inspired by Sissinghurst: purples, mauves, clarets, lavenders, and even magenta, all of which benefit from the mitigating plantings of white. —STEPHEN ORR

**THE LONG PERSPECTIVE** **A masterpiece of 20th-century garden design, Sissinghurst, near right, has a number of surprising vistas that have exerted their influence on a number of other gardens.** **ON THE LONG ISLAND** **property, far right, the sense of space has been expanded by the use of formal structural elements in the manner of Sissinghurst. The result is a long hallway terminating in an alcove of hydrangeas.**


SISSINGHURST


AMERICAN STYLE



# Mississippi à la Mode

Richard Keith Langham gives a southern house the look and feel of a simply grand parfait



**THE OWNERS' LOVE** of travel is announced in the two-story rotunda, opposite page. The limestone floor, by Paris Ceramics, has the shape of a compass inlayed; four painted panels depict continents. The reproduction Italian chandelier is from Niermann Weeks. **A PAIR OF IRON** deer heads with latticework baskets, this page, testament to the owners' passion for hunting, flank the front door.

WRITTEN BY CATHLEEN MEDWICK PHOTOGRAPHED BY PIETER ESTERSOHN

PRODUCED BY CAROLINA IRVING STYLED BY JAMES GRIFFIN



**AN ICE-CREAM PALETTE** unifies and enlivens the living room. Striped Indian pink walls set off a pouf covered in cocoa silk velvet from Clarence House, and 18th-century pine mantel from Nigel Bartlett, London. An 18th-century English mirror is from O. F. Wilson, London.

THE HUNTRESS was on the prowl again. Except this time she wasn't on safari in remotest Africa, she was on her home turf, in Jackson, Mississippi, where she and her husband had just commissioned an architect to build a house. Now they were out to bag an interior designer. The architect, Lewis Graeber III, had done several houses with Richard Keith Langham, a transplanted Alabamian now based in New York City. The clients were hesitant at first, but having seen another Langham project, they were captivated.

The game plan was clear. The house the clients lived in was too richly appointed to suit their needs. They were a young couple with four children. The new house had to be big but welcoming, with room to entertain frequently. As Graeber puts it, they "wanted a house that had a wonderful presence to it but was not so goopy—I call it phony colony—that people would say, 'Oh, my goodness, another wedding-cake house.'"

Graeber's solution was to build an Irish Georgian-style manor house. It has a stucco exterior and an antique slate roof. It has classic details—a rotunda with rooms fanning off it, an immense Palladian window—but none of the festoons and swags that dress up English Georgian houses. It has the grandeur of simplicity—and southern hospitality to boot.

Langham saw the house as a chance to give tradition a fresh coat of thought. For the walls, he used colors that would give the lord of an Irish manor pause: Indian



**ENORMOUS WINDOWS** allow the living room to be bathed in light. Silk draperies made from a Decorator's Walk fabric add to the creamy feel. A 19th-century urn from Guy Regal Ltd., NYC, stands on an Adam-style pedestal from Newel Art Galleries, NYC.





WHIMSY IS THE byword of the garden room, opposite page, which is tented in Erector Stripe canvas from Travers & Co. The marble floors echo the color. Iron banquettes, covered in a cotton from Dek Tillet, and the chairs are designed by Langham. CHOCOLATE-COLORED walls make the dining room, this page, lusciously inviting. Saddle-seat chairs with monogrammed slipcovers designed by Langham surround a mahogany table. The Hepplewhite chair has a cotton Fortuny seat.

pink in the living room; flat chocolate brown in the dining room; flat mulled red in the library. He approached the rotunda symbolically, inlaying a decorative compass in the limestone floor—a reference to the clients' travels. For the rotunda's walls, he commissioned paintings representing Africa, Asia, North America, and Europe. As an exotic touch, he put a Venetian blackamoor on the landing to peer down at the known world.

The house is dramatically laid out, so that a person standing at the front door can see through the rotunda to the Indian-pink living room and out the Palladian window to the backyard. The effect is dazzling: the serene coolness of limestone, then the surprise of those



**HUNTING MOTIFS extend to the master bedroom, opposite page, where marquetry on the 19th-century Austrian commode depicts the huntress Diana. Langham's gothic bed pelmet is covered in Christopher Norman's Teneriffe. The sofa is covered in a Clarence House silk satin. A LEOPARD RUG interrupts the European look—French chandelier, Italian armchair—of her master bath, left. THE GUEST ROOM, below, has a cotton Fortuny headboard. The canopy fabric is from Decorator's Walk. Sources, see back of book.**

pink walls, painted in matte and shiny stripes. The northern light from the 16-foot-high window casts a glow on the barrel-vaulted ceiling and the antique, blond Oushak carpet. The armchairs dance with a Brunschwig & Fils's chintz patterned with quails—a nod to the huntress. A nearby pouf ("our tuffet," Langham fondly calls it) is upholstered in a cocoa silk velvet with a flouncy taffeta underskirt, from Clarence House; the side windows' maidenly ivory silk draperies are lined with a filmy pink under-curtain. Above the English pine mantel, an eighteenth-century mirror with an etched-glass border silvers the light. The effect is ethereal. "It's almost like ice cream," says Langham. "It's like walking into a parfait."

To maximize this effect, Graeber designed two fanciful display cabinets for a collection of creamware, blanc-de-chine, and Belleek. Flanking the Palladian window are a pair of Adam-style torchères ending in gold-leaf hooves (another of the pervasive but subtle hunting motifs), topped by eighteenth-century Italian urns. In them are magnolia leaves—just a hint of the old South.

The dining room also suggests a southern convention: gracious entertaining. The custom table and saddle-seated chairs, all designed by Langham, are made for long and leisurely meals. Behind the table, a generously proportioned window sports chintz curtains hung from a serpentine giltwood pelmet.

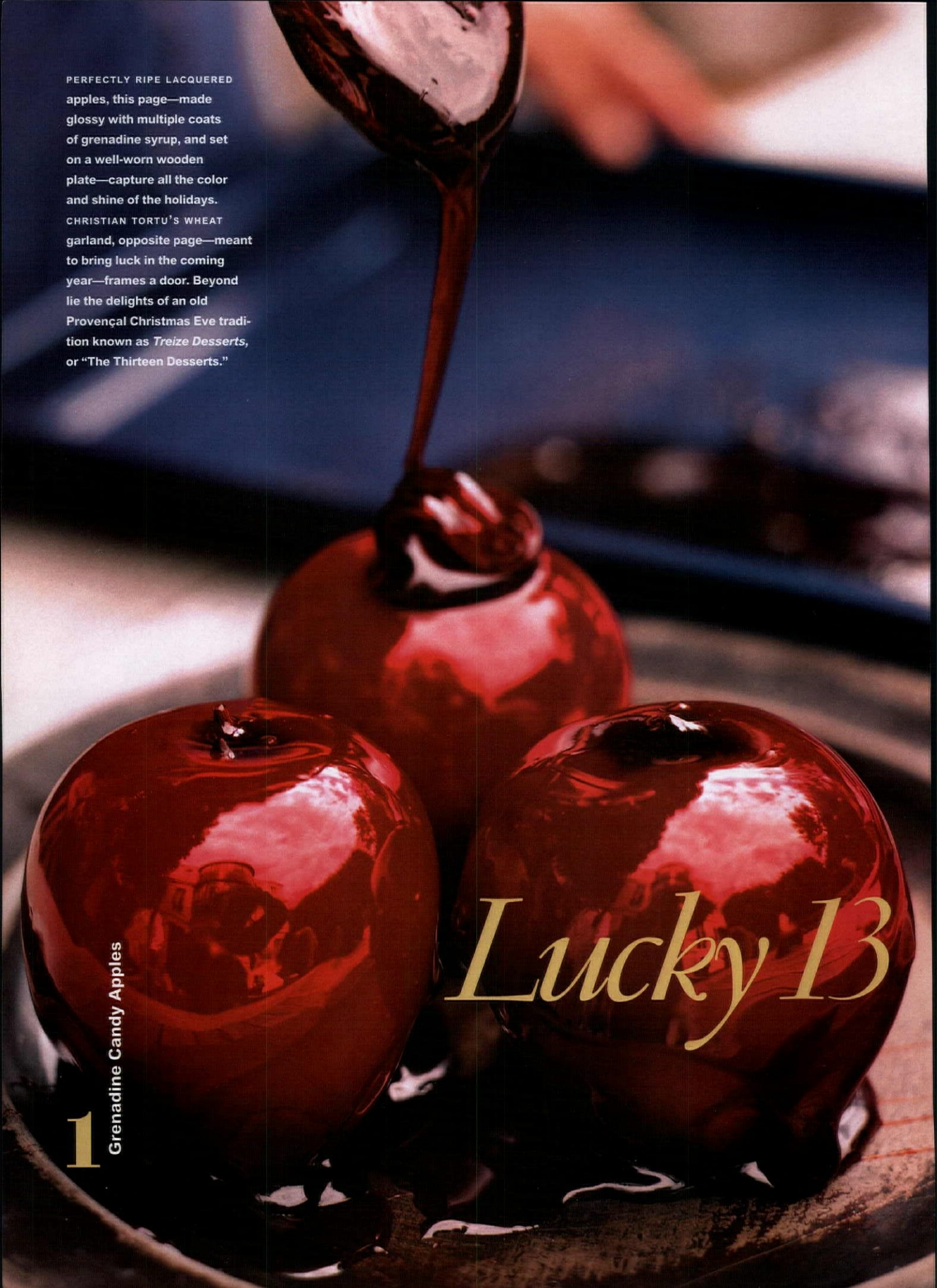
The mood darkens and deepens in the library, a cocoon of a room with a high-backed English, leather wing chair and club chairs covered in a camel, red, and green wool tartan. The ceiling is painted a soft black that sucks in the light; this is a room to disappear in, a place of reading and rest. The focal point is the owners' collection of orbs made from minerals and semi-precious stones, displayed on a hanging shelf that Langham designed.

In hot pursuit of whimsy, Langham tented the garden room in black-and-white-striped canvas from Travers & Co., and checkered the floors with two kinds of marble. For this room he designed two iron chairs, as well as a pair of iron banquettes that he upholstered in red striéd canvas from Dek Tillet. The huntress herself supplied the zebra head (a trophy) mounted on one wall.

Gentler proof of her passion can be divined from the marquetry image of Diana, Roman goddess of the hunt, that graces an Austrian commode in the master bedroom. Here, Langham was faced with a conundrum: how to fit in a big, old, unattractive bed that the husband wanted to keep. "His wife and I sort of sneaked around behind his back," Langham explains. "We had the poles extended, we had the rice carving sanded away, this wild sort of Gothic pelmet added to the top, and then draped it in a lot of hoopla. I said to the owners, 'You're going to feel you're riding on a Mardi Gras float.' From that audacious construct, Langham suspended custom-dyed printed cotton bed curtains, lined with a shimmery ice-blue silk satin. What cool creature comfort for a Mississippi night.







PERFECTLY RIPE LACQUERED apples, this page—made glossy with multiple coats of grenadine syrup, and set on a well-worn wooden plate—capture all the color and shine of the holidays. CHRISTIAN TORTU'S WHEAT garland, opposite page—meant to bring luck in the coming year—frames a door. Beyond lie the delights of an old Provençal Christmas Eve tradition known as *Treize Desserts*, or "The Thirteen Desserts."

# *Lucky 13*

**1** Grenadine Candy Apples

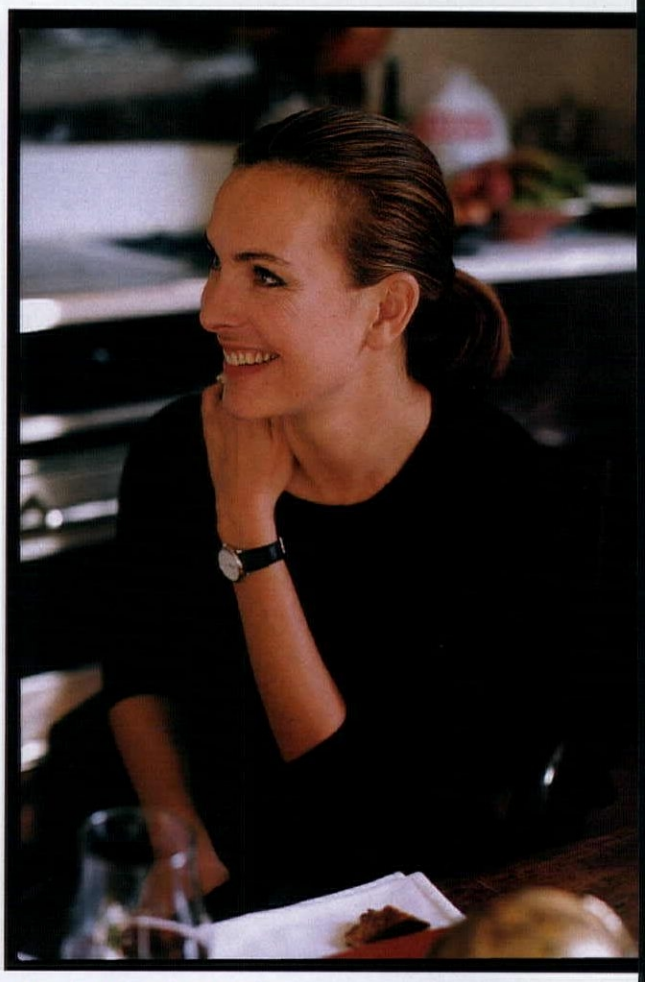


Carole Bouquet prepares "treize desserts," the traditional Christmas Eve feast of Provence

WRITTEN BY ALISON COOK PHOTOGRAPHED BY MICHAEL McDERMITT

PRODUCED BY LORA ZARUBIN



**AGLOW FROM HER EFFORTS in the kitchen, actress Carole Bouquet takes a moment to relax. In her Paris house, Christmas smells like mandarin oranges and tastes like a crown of old-fashioned almond paste.**

ORDINARILY, the nineteenth-century Paris house of actress and Chanel spokesperson Carole Bouquet breathes a certain Japanesque calm. But at the moment, it smells and sounds like the candy shop of a child's fevered holiday imaginings. The scent of grenadine, orange, burnt sugar, chocolate, and piercing aniseed fills the air, along with a subterranean, very French current of cigarette smoke. An inarticulate chorus of *mmmms* and *ahhhhs* groans from the long, high-ceilinged kitchen. There, an avid gaggle of family, friends, assistants, and droppers-by clusters around Sophie Rigon, a celebrated Provençal cook, who fusses, quick and birdlike, over a vivid constellation of sweets. These are the venerated *treize desserts*: 13 confections that by long southern French tradition cap the marathon Christmas Eve feast slyly known as *Le Gros Souper*, or "The Big Supper."

In her pared-back dining room, Carole stands pensively, considering her table. Her high, unfurrowed brow seems on the verge of knitting itself: in the Bouquet household, setting a festive table is a passionate business. So she has commissioned a fantastical papier-mâché tablecloth from two artisans who style themselves Farfelus Farfadets, the "Harebrained Elves." Flying suns and leggy stars scamper across its frozen folds of deep indigo; a dark phalanx of scarred, timeworn wooden plates stands ready to receive the fruits, nuts, pastries, and bonbons springing nonstop from Carole and Sophie's dexterous hands.

Carole tinkers with a hillock of mandarin oranges, potent reminders of childhood Christmases. She balances pebbly almond *tuiles* on their delicate rims. She adjusts a grape leaf, nudges a bunch of fresh grapes, presses sticks of firewood into service as a rustic platform. "Shall I put the *calissons* with the *nougat blanc*?" she worries, eyeing two ancient species of almondy confection, each sandwiched between sheets of edible rice paper as fine as lattice-patterned stationery. With a jeweler's fastidiousness, she sets candied fruits to glint in a sunny corner. "I could make an enormous pile of walnuts!" she exclaims suddenly, darting for the pantry. Finally she is satisfied. "It works, it works," she murmurs. And then, "It looks like a Moyen Age table."

Which is fitting. Many of the 13 desserts of Christmas come with histories that extend to the Middle Ages or even earlier. In their emphasis on regional, highly seasonal products from farmyard and orchard—fruits and honey and all manner of nuts—some of these sweetmeats have an almost Biblical aura. The

## 5 Les Quatres Mendiants (The Four Beggars)

**Makes 12 4-inch chocolates**

| | |
|---|---|
| **1 pound** | bittersweet, best-quality chocolate (such as Valrhona), grated or coarsely chopped |
| **¼ cup** | whole almonds, lightly roasted |
| **¼ cup** | pine nuts, lightly roasted |
| **¼ cup** | shelled, unsalted pistachio nuts |
| **¼ cup** | walnut pieces, lightly roasted |
| **¼ cup** | hazelnuts, lightly roasted |
| **¼ cup** | golden raisins |

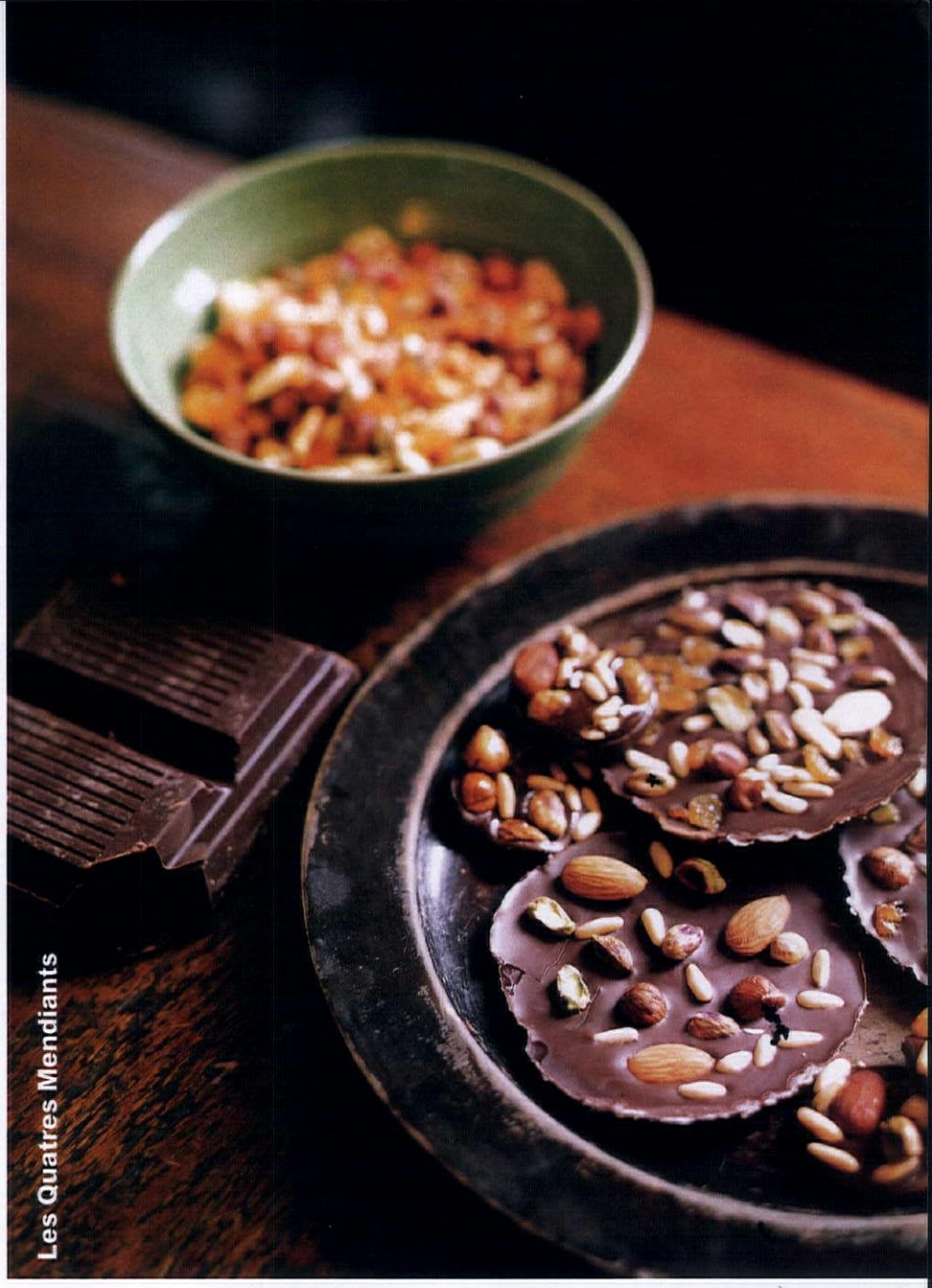
Cut 12 6-inch squares of aluminum foil and line 12 4-inch tart molds.

Melt the chocolate in the top half of a double boiler or in a small bowl set over a saucepan of water. Place over low heat and stir often. When all the chocolate has melted, remove it from the heat and pour equal amounts into the lined molds.

Let the chocolate cool for 5 to 10 minutes in the molds and then distribute the various nuts and raisins equally over the tops. If they sink, wait another few minutes and try again. The chocolate should be soft enough that the nuts and raisins adhere, but not so soft that they sink.

When the chocolates have hardened, lift them out of the molds and gently remove the aluminum foil. The cooling process can be speeded up by putting the candies in the refrigerator for 30 minutes.

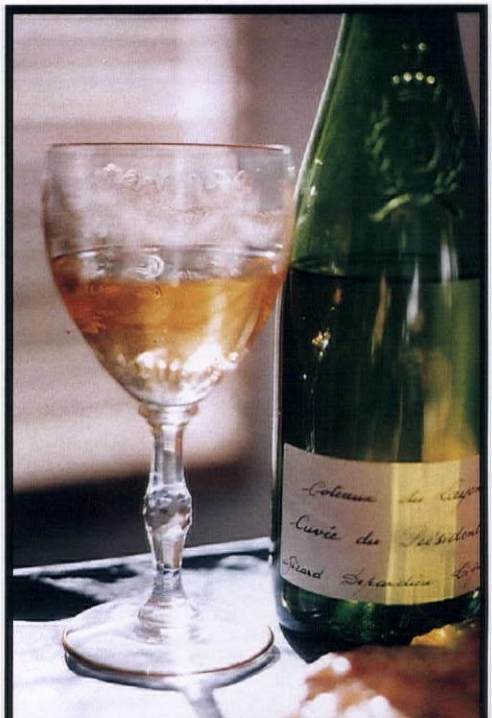
Place the chocolates on a serving tray or store in an airtight container in the refrigerator for up to 5 days.



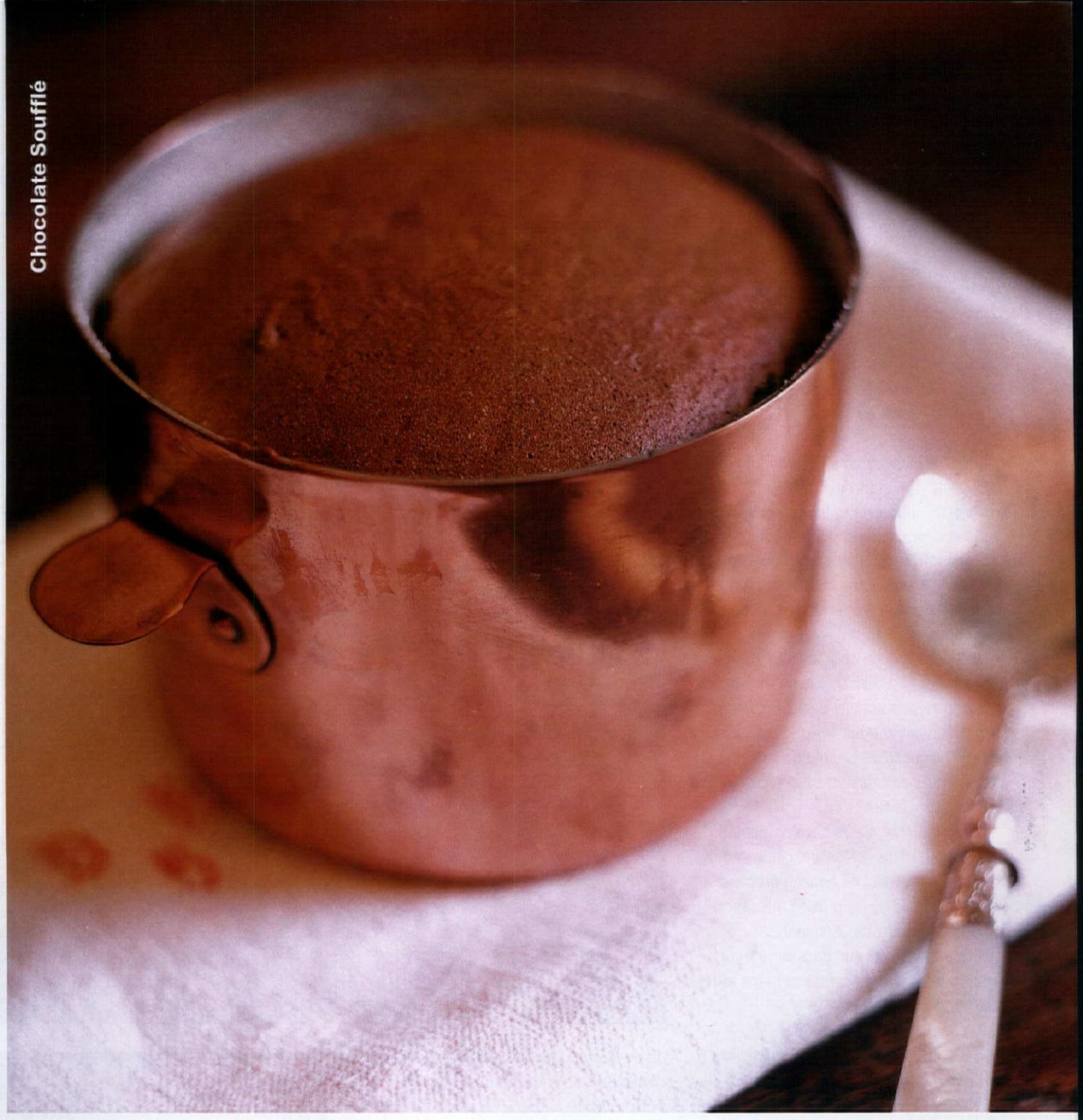
Les Quatres Mendiants

honeyed black and white nougats without which a Provençal Christmas is unthinkable, descend from Near Eastern candies a wandering Crusader might have encountered. A fourteenth-century Avignon pope would recognize the glistening whole fruits confits on Carole's table, as would Mme. de Sévigné 300 years later. Nostradamus, the sixteenth-century astrologer/alchemist/physician, would have greeted Sophie's tart and sublimely gritty slab of rose-hued quince paste as an old friend—and in fact, as the very medieval recipe for *cotignac* he published in the section of his book about fruit-preserving techniques. All of these personages, all of these French generations, are in a sense invisible guests at a *treize desserts* fête—not to mention the 12 disciples and the baby Jesus, who give the collation its symbolic number.

Like *treize desserts,* Carole and Sophie have a history. "She taught me to cook," explains Carole simply. No small thing for this slim, finely chiseled woman who seems the unlikeliest of gastronomes, whose eyes light up on the subject ("I would never do a fashion shoot in my house, but food . . ."), whose companion of four years, actor Gérard Depardieu, has been quoted as saying, "What you eat and drink is 50 percent of life." Carole and Sophie became friends during



**CUVÉE DU PRÉSIDENT, a semisweet wine, makes a perfect complement to all 13 desserts. Sources and mail-order information, see back of book.**



# 6 Chocolate Soufflé

**Makes 4 servings**

| | |
|---|---|
| **1 Tbsp.** | unsalted butter |
| **2 Tbsp.** | granulated sugar to dust the mold |
| **4 ounces** | best-quality bittersweet chocolate, grated or coarsely chopped |
| **1/4 cup** | milk |
| **1/3 cup** | plus 2 Tbsp. granulated sugar |
| **3** | egg yolks |
| **4** | egg whites at room temperature (or lukewarm) |
| **1 pinch** | salt |
| **1/2 tsp.** | cream of tartar |
| | Confectioners' sugar |

Preheat the oven to 375°F. Butter and sugar a 6-cup soufflé mold or charlotte.

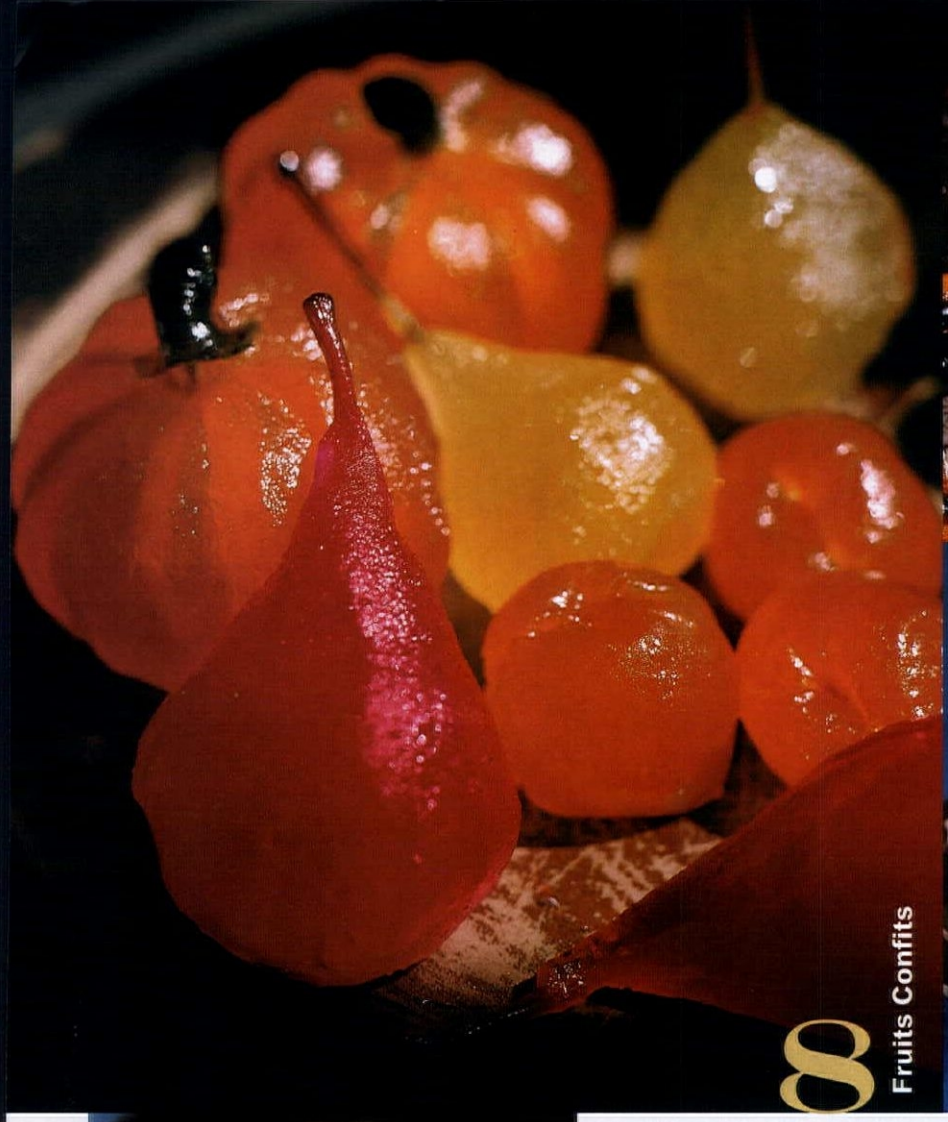
Melt the chocolate in a double boiler over low heat. When the chocolate has melted, remove from heat. Whisk in the milk and 1/3 cup of sugar until the mixture is smooth; then whisk in the egg yolks, one at a time. Make sure no traces of yolk remain visible.

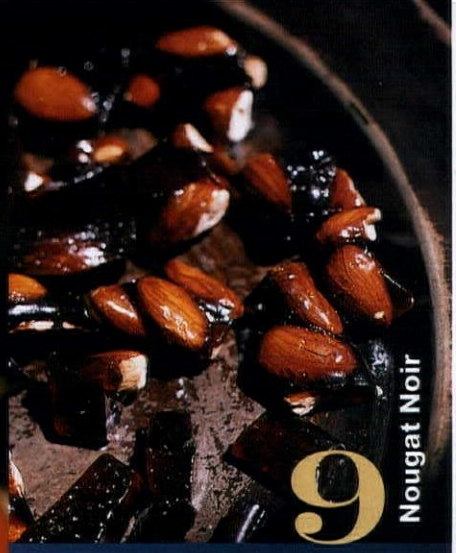
Whip the egg whites, salt, and cream of tartar with a whisk or an electric mixer at medium speed. When the whites are opaque and begining to stiffen, slowly add the 2 Tbsp. of sugar. If you are using a mixer, increase the speed to high. Beat until stiff.

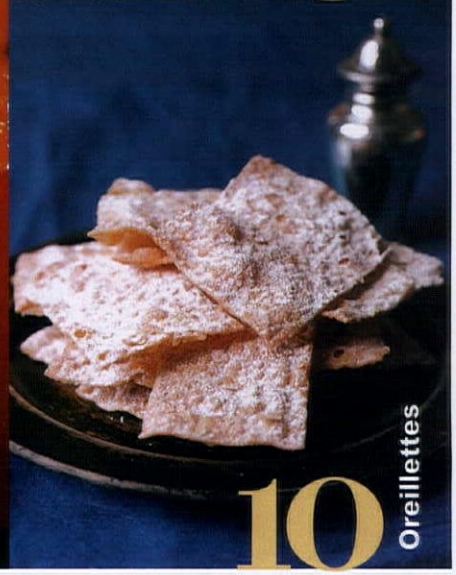
Stir 1/4 of the beaten whites into the chocolate mixture, then gently fold the chocolate into the remaining whites.

Pour the batter into the mold and place it on the middle rack of the oven. Immediately reduce the temperature to 350°F and bake for 35 to 40 minutes or until a knife blade comes out clean. If you like your soufflé creamy at the center, remove it from the oven sooner.

Dust with confectioners' sugar and serve immediately. Optional accompaniments are chocolate sauce and whipped cream.







a film shoot in Aix-en-Provence. "Everyone knew her in the South," says Carole. "Her house is open. She arrives with the food, the cakes. She cooks for everybody, so everybody wants to know her, and she ends up knowing the whole world."

In the kitchen, the two women bend together like a single, practiced cooking machine over a mound of almond paste. Ten years ago, they did the 13 desserts together for the first time; now the exercise has the comforting familiarity of ritual. Carole's first love is the timeless braided crown of almond paste, scored in star bursts with a wooden mold and coiled coil within careful coil. The subtle paste—unadulterated, hand-ground almond powder ("Not refined! No additives!" crows Sophie) with a little sugar and egg white—has the taste of antiquity. Depardieu, passing through, cannot resist palming a sample and peeking into the oven at the golden olive-oil brioche—*la pompe à l'huile*—that is the centerpiece of any self-respecting *treize desserts* array. "Oh, *magnifique*!" he pronounces seriously. "It smells very well."

It is the licorice-y aroma of anise, a quirk of Sophie's home in Camargue, that makes the *pompe* her own. It is a dense flat loaf prevented from puffing up by judicious poking with matchsticks, and innocent of the butter that lightens and citifies contemporary versions. Not that she doesn't improvise on established *treize desserts* custom. She and Carole like to add a chocolate soufflé in the style of Gaston le Notre. And her take on the hallowed *quatres mendiants*—the dried fruits and nuts that represent the begging orders of friars—is very much her own. Into pools of melted, bittersweet *couverture* chocolate goes a mosaic of pine nuts, golden raisins, pistachios, and almonds; the resulting candies have an irregular, homespun charm like that of Sophie's *pompe*.

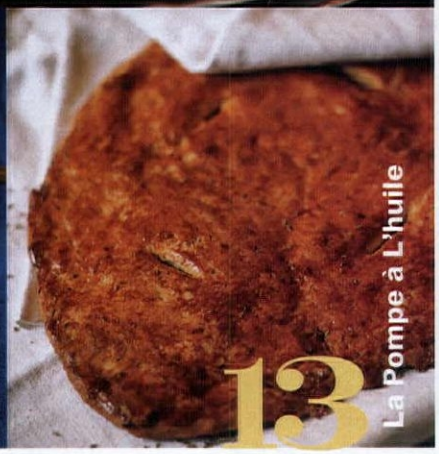
Once you get going on *treize desserts* manufacture, it can be hard to stop. "We have more than thirteen," wails Carole, as Sophie ladles yet another deep, crystalline coating of grenadine lacquer on a tray of candied apples. Sophie's teenage daughters have made the fragile, deep-fried rags of pastry dough known as *oreillettes,* or small ears, dusted with a wintry blast of powdered sugar. A mountain of dried fruit and nut halves, bound



Tuiles



12 Nougat Blanc



13 La Pompe à L'huile

## 11 Tuiles

**Makes approximately 15 tuiles**

Preparation time: 10 minutes to make the batter, 1 ½ hours resting time for the batter, and approximately 10 minutes baking time.

| | |
|---|---|
| **⅓ cup** | flour |
| **½ cup** | plus 2 Tbsp. granulated sugar |
| **1 pinch** | salt |
| **3** | egg whites from large eggs |
| **2 ½ Tbsp.** | melted unsalted butter |
| **3 Tbsp.** | (approximately) melted butter to grease the parchment paper |
| **2 Tbsp.** | (approximately) milk |

Sift the flour, sugar, and salt into a small mixing bowl. Add the egg whites and then the melted unsalted butter, and whisk until just combined. Set the batter aside to rest for 1½ hours before using, or cover and refrigerate for up to 3 days.

Preheat the oven to 350°F. Heavily butter 3 pieces of parchment paper, and place one each on three baking sheets. Using 1½ Tbsps. per tuile, spoon the batter onto the baking sheets, 5 per sheet. The cookies should be at least 2 inches apart, as they spread during baking. Dipping a finger in the milk first, spread each cookie into a 3-inch round. To insure even baking, make the edges no thinner than the centers.

Bake the tuiles 8 to 10 minutes, or until the edges are golden and the centers are just beginning to color. Remove the cookies from the oven. As soon as they are cool enough to handle, remove the tuiles from the baking sheets and drape them around rolling pins or wine bottles. If the cookies become too cool and stiff to bend, return them to the oven for a minute or so and they will soften up.

**THE RECIPES FOR OTHER DESSERTS may be found at www.food.epicurious.com/find/lucky13 or you may fax 212-880-4694 or send a request to Recipes, House & Garden, 342 Madison Avenue, NY, NY 10173. No phone calls please.**

together with pastel fondant, makes an appearance; they could be straight from a Renaissance court supper. The wild cards make *treize desserts* as much a living thing as the ritual items do: the beauty of the custom is that each family, each particular region has its own traditions. It is a principle that applies as much to San Francisco or Kalamazoo as to Marseilles or Paris.

In the end, when Carole's guests pass underneath the wheaten doorway garland—a hopeful augury for prosperity in the new year—fashioned by florist Christian Tortu they will confront far more than an overgrown dessert table. By the light of three traditional Christmas candles and a magic, millennial mobile by the hairbrained elves, they will find the past and the future, the worldly and the divine, France and even the universe.

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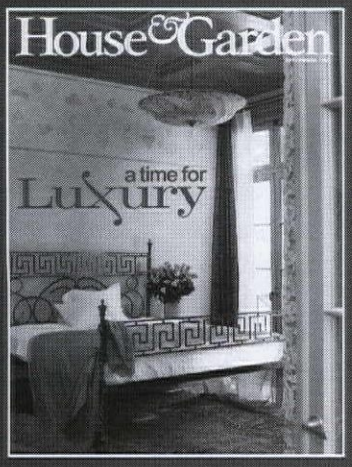
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**Interior Design**, Keith Irvine, Irvine & Fleming Inc., NYC. 212-888-6000. All fabrics and rugs available through architects and designers. **Pages 82-83**, Clarence House, NYC. 212-752-2890. Brunschwig & Fils, NYC. 212-838-7878. Stark, NYC. 212-752-9000. **Pages 84-85**, Cowtan & Tout, NYC. 212-753-4488. **Pages 86-87**, Stroheim & Romann, Long Island City, NY. 718-706-7000. Fortuny, NYC. 212-753-7153. Available through architects and designers. **Pages 88-89**, Treillage, NYC. 212-535-2288. **Pages 90-91**, Old World Weavers, NYC. 212-355-7186. Scalamandré, NYC. 212-980-3888. Lee Jofa, NYC. 212-688-0444. Rose Cumming, NYC. 212-758-0844. **Striped upholstered chair**, Brunschwig & Fils, NYC. 212-838-7878. **Andirons**, Asta, NYC. 212-750-3364. **Upholstery on tufted armchair**, Clarence House, NYC.

**TRADE SECRETS Pages 94-95**

Cowtan & Tout, NYC. Passementerie, NYC. 212-355-7600. Christopher Norman, NYC. 212-647-0303. Clarence House, NYC. 212-752-2890. Stroheim & Romann, Long Island City, NY. 718-706-7000. Brunschwig & Fils, NYC. 212-838-7878.

**SUBLIME SETTINGS Pages 96-105**

**Pages 96-97**, Tommy Anderson, Sharon, CT. 860-364-5830. Asprey. 800-883-2777. James Robinson Inc., NYC 10022. 212-752-6166. Porthault Linens Inc., NYC. 212-688-1660. Valentino Home Collection, NYC. 212-772-6969. Silk Surplus, NYC. 212-753-6511. **Pages 98-99**, Wyler's, NYC. 212-879-9848. Partridge's Fine Art PLC, London. 44-171-629-0834. Alicia Abrams Antiques, Great Barrington, MA. 403-528-3201. Pottery Barn. 800-922-5507. Garrard's, London, England W1. 44-171-493-6767. Anichini, NYC. Available through architects and designers. 212-679-9540. Mokuba, NYC. 212-302-5010. **Pages 100-101**, Madison Cox Design Inc., NYC. 212-242-4631. **Eero Saarinen chairs**, c.i.t.e., NYC. 212-431-7272. **Throw**, special order from Yves Saint Laurent, NYC. 212-736-7676. Cora Ginsburg LLC, NYC. 212-744-1352. Einstein Moomjy, NYC. 800-864-3633. **Tony Duguette votives**, Forty One, NYC. 212-343-0935. **An American Silver Centerpiece Bowl** by Whiting Mfg. Co. Providence, RI, Sotheby's. Baccarat. 800-777-0100. Moss, NYC. 212-226-2190. **Acrylic room divider**, Troy, NYC. 212-941-4777. **Shimmer** (top) and **Thermoflect** (bottom) tablecloths, Old World Weavers, NYC. 212-355-7186. **Votive candleholder** (in star shape), Amy Perlin Antiques, NYC. 212-593-5756. **Pages 102-103**, Avi Adler Flowers, Brooklyn, NY. 718-243-0804. Baccarat. 800-777-0100. Scalamandré. 800-932-4361. Available through architects and designers. D & F Workroom Inc., NYC. 212-352-0160. Saint Louis. 800-238-5522. Newel Art Galleries Inc., NYC. 212-758-1970. Bernardaud. 800-884-7775. **Arcantia flatware**, Christofle. 800-799-6886. **Loop napkin**, Archipelago, NYC. 212-334-9460. **# 4548 Striped Organdy**, Mokuba, NYC. 212-302-5010. **Pillar candles**, Illuminations, Santa Rosa, CA. 707-769-2700. **Thistle stemware in red**, Hermès. 800-441-4488. **Pages 104-105**, **All Nymphenberg pieces**: Porzellan-Manufaktr Nymphenberg, Nordliches Schlossrondell, 8 80638 Munich, Germany. 089-179-19-70; via e-mail: www.nymphenberg-porczellan.de. **Borgia dinner forks and knives**, Buccellatti. 800-223-7885. E. Braun & Company. 800-372-7286. William Yeoward Crystal. 800-818-8484.

**IT'S NOT ACADEMIC Pages 106-113**

**Pages 106-1077**, **Architect**, Moshie Safdie, Somerville, MA. 617-629-2100. Chan Moch Architects, Cambridge, MA. 617-576-2508. **Ashton sofas**, Crate & Barrel. 888-249-4155. Chimera, Boston, MA . 617-542-3233. **Pages 110-111**, Mulberry through Lee Jofa, NY. 516-752-7600. Available through architects and designers. **Pages 112-113**, **Armchair**, MacKenzie-Childs Ltd.,NYC. 212-570-6050.

## MISSISSIPPI À LA MODE Pages 126-133

**Interior Design**, Richard Keith Langham Inc., NYC. 212-759-1212. All fabrics available through architects and designers. **Pages 126-127**, Paris Ceramics, NYC. 212-644-2782. Niermann Weeks, Annapolis, MD. 410-923-0123. Available through architects and designers. **Pages 128-129**, Clarence House, NYC. 212-752-2890. Nigel Bartlett, London, England. 44-171-378-7895. O.F. Wilson, London, England. 44-171-352-9554. Brunschwig & Fils, NYC. 212-838-7878. Guy Regal Ltd., NYC. 212-888-2134. Newel Art Galleries Inc., NYC. 212-758-1970. **Curtain fabric**, Decorator's Walk, NYC. 212-319-7100. **Pages 130-131**, **Erector Stripe**, Dek Tillet through Travers & Co., NYC. 212-888-7900. David Duncan Antiques, NYC. 212-688-0666. **Tapa fabric**, Fortuny, NYC. 212-753-7153. **Pages 132-133**, Carleton's V, NYC. 212-355-4525. Available through architects and designers. John Rosselli, NYC. 212-593-2060. Available through architects and designers. **Bed pelmet fabricated by** Robert Johnson. 901-525-3200. Christopher Norman, NYC. 212-647-0303. International Fur. 800-363-7723.



## HUNTING & GATHERING Pages 39-46

## LUCKY 13 Pages 134-140

**2. Quince paste**, "Membrillo," $19 for lb., Dean & Deluca. 800-221-7714. **3. Mandarins**, Dean & Deluca; also at Balducci's, $1.98 per lb.,. 800-225-3822. **5. Valrhohna Chocolate "Equitorial,"** in 2 1/4 lbs., $19.99, and 6 lbs., $55, New York Baking Supplies, NYC. 212-675-2253 **8. Fruit Confit**, Bordeaux, France. 33-05-48-05-75. **French Glacéed Fruits**, $24 for 8.8 oz. or 6 pieces, Williams-Sonoma. 800-541-1262. **12. Nougat blanc**, Fouquet, Paris, France. 33-1-47-23-30-36. **French Nougat**, $16 for 4.05 oz., Williams-Sonoma. **Pages 134-135**, **Wheat threshold**, Christian Tortu, Paris, 75006. 33-1-43-26-02-56. **Tablecloth**, farfelus farfadets, Les Lilas, France. 33-1-43-60-66-75. **Pages 138-139**, **Soufflé pot**, Galerie 13 Rue Jacob, Paris, France. 33-1-43-26-99-89. **Linens**, Fuchsia Dentelle, Paris, France. 33-1-48-04-75-61.

## CORRECTIONS

In the October issue, on **Page 34** in Domestic Bliss, the number for the Room catalogue was incorrect. The number is 888-420-ROOM. In the September issue on **pages 240-241**, leather elephant, $595, early-18th-century carpet, $1,500, and assorted porcelain Limoges and Herron, $100 to $1,000, Pinocchio's, 30 Franklin Street, Newport, RI. 401-846-2887.

## PHOTO CREDITS

On **page 78**, **Past Perfect**, *House & Garden*, December 1948, Courtesy of CNP Archives.

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—PRODUCED BY LIEZEL MUNEZ

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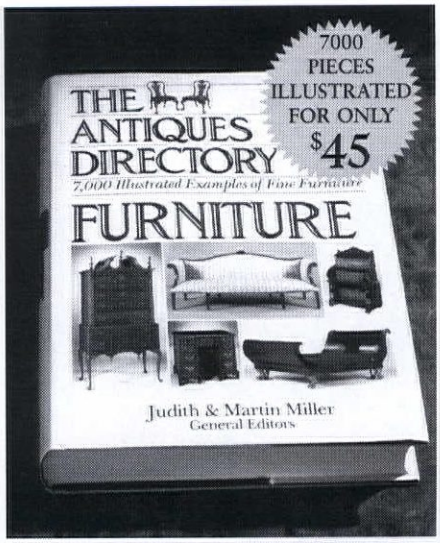
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Our architect insisted we skip Christmas so we don't overload his design with decorations.



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